Gc
974.402
C74br
1753043

M. L.

REYNOLDS HISTORICAL
GENEALOGY COLLECTION

Gc

ALLEN COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

3 1833 01105 8168

840

MEMORIES of CONCORD, Mass.

BY

MARY HOSMER BROWN

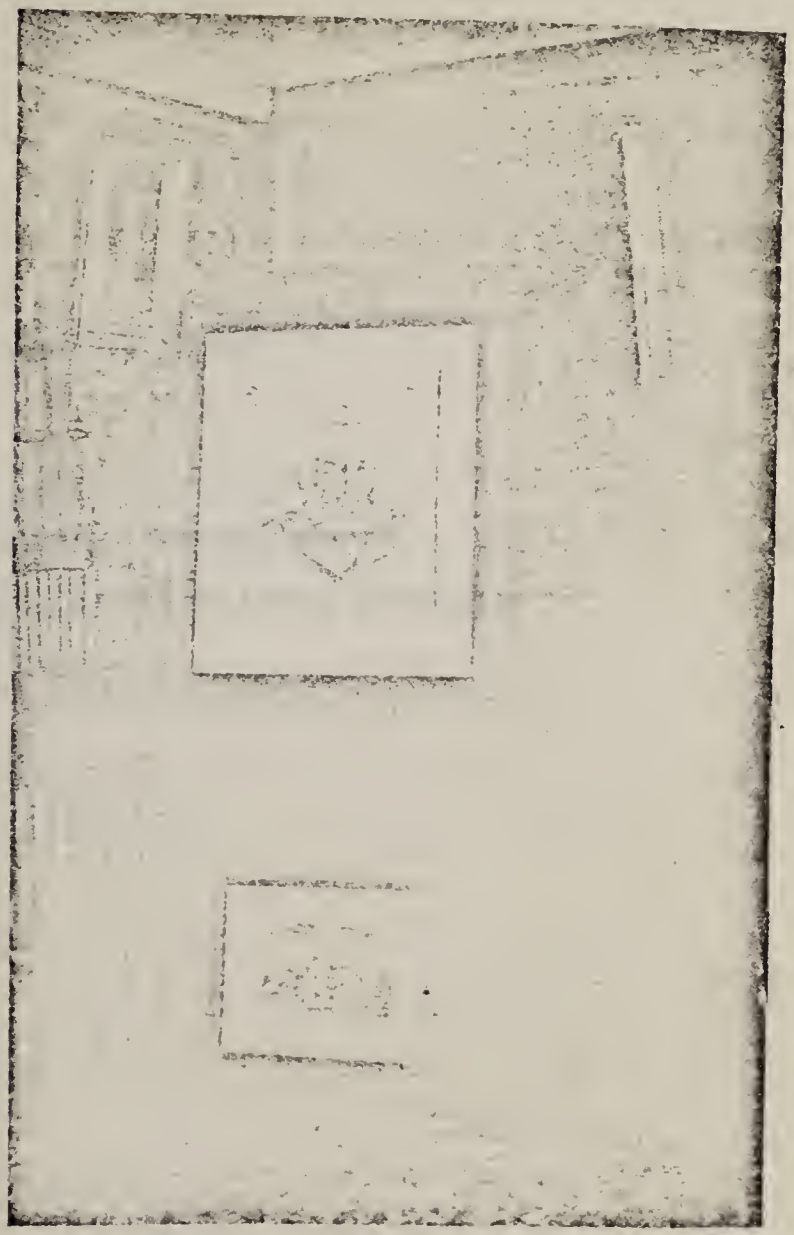
Illustrated from photographs and from paintings
By J. RANDOLPH BROWN

BOSTON
THE FOUR SEAS COMPANY
PUBLISHERS

840

1753043

MEMORIES OF CONCORD



PORTRAIT OF EDMUND HOSMER
IN THE PARLOR OF THE HOUSE

K 1000

TO EDMUND HOSMER BROWN

THIS BOOK IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED

CONTENTS

Chapter		Page
I.	EDMUND HOSMER AND HIS ANCESTRY	11
II.	CONCORD NEIGHBORS	21
III.	RALPH WALDO EMERSON	29
IV.	EMERSON AS A LECTURER	56
V.	ELLEN EMERSON	62
VI.	NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE	67
VII.	THE ALCOTTS	73
VIII.	HENRY D. THOREAU	88

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

PORTRAIT OF EDMUND HOSMER IN THE PARLOR OF THE HOUSE . . . Frontispiece

Facing Page

STAIRWAY IN THE VASSALL-CRAIGIE-LONGFELLOW HOUSE, CAMBRIDGE . . . 12

THE HOSMER HOUSE 26

A CORNER OF THE LIVING ROOM IN THE HOSMER HOUSE 54

THE EMERSON HOUSE 62

THE OLD MANSE 72

THE ORCHARD HOUSE 78

CONCORD SCHOOL OF PHILOSOPHY . . . 82

CONCORD RIVER 92

FOREWORD

TO THE GREAT GRANDCHILDREN OF EDMUND HOSMER OF CONCORD, MASSACHUSETTS: BORN OCTOBER TENTH, 1798—DIED OCTOBER FOURTEENTH, 1881.

In writing these recollections of Concord, two hopes have been in my mind. First, that you may become interested enough in these people that have made the town famous, to study their lives and become familiar with their writings.

The second is that you may emulate not only the integrity of life, but also that sturdy independence of thought, combined with a fearless loyalty to truth as they saw it, which has always been characteristic of your Hosmer ancestors since the founding of the town.

As I have written down these notes for you to remember years hence, the writing has taken me back to many happy days spent in Concord. All these days were made possible largely by one whose rare wisdom and unusual discrimination of the fitness of things made her one of the finest of companions. A lover of nature and possessing a keen intellect that would have enhanced a profession, her abilities were used as a home-maker. The trait I remember best was an unselfish love that reached out to all who needed sympathy or care. This wonderful forgetfulness of self—like a silver thread that makes the simplest garment glisten with light—so permeated the daily serenity of her life that we as children loved her, but only realized as we grew older the strength of character that made such devotion so simple and natural. Such was my grandmother (and your great, great grandmother) Sally Peirce—for more than fifty years the wife of Edmund Hosmer of Concord, Massachusetts.

CHAPTER I.

EDMUND HOSMER AND HIS ANCESTRY

LOW beamed ceilings in a quaint old house, over which arched wide spreading elm trees, a silver-haired man building houses to amuse a child of four and both laughing in glee as the tiny fingers demolished them.

Such is my first remembrance of Concord. My grandfather was wont to vary our fun by drawing letters for me to recognize. In this way, I learned my alphabet, and from this time on my visits to Concord were a source of enjoyment constantly mixed with lessons of inestimable value.

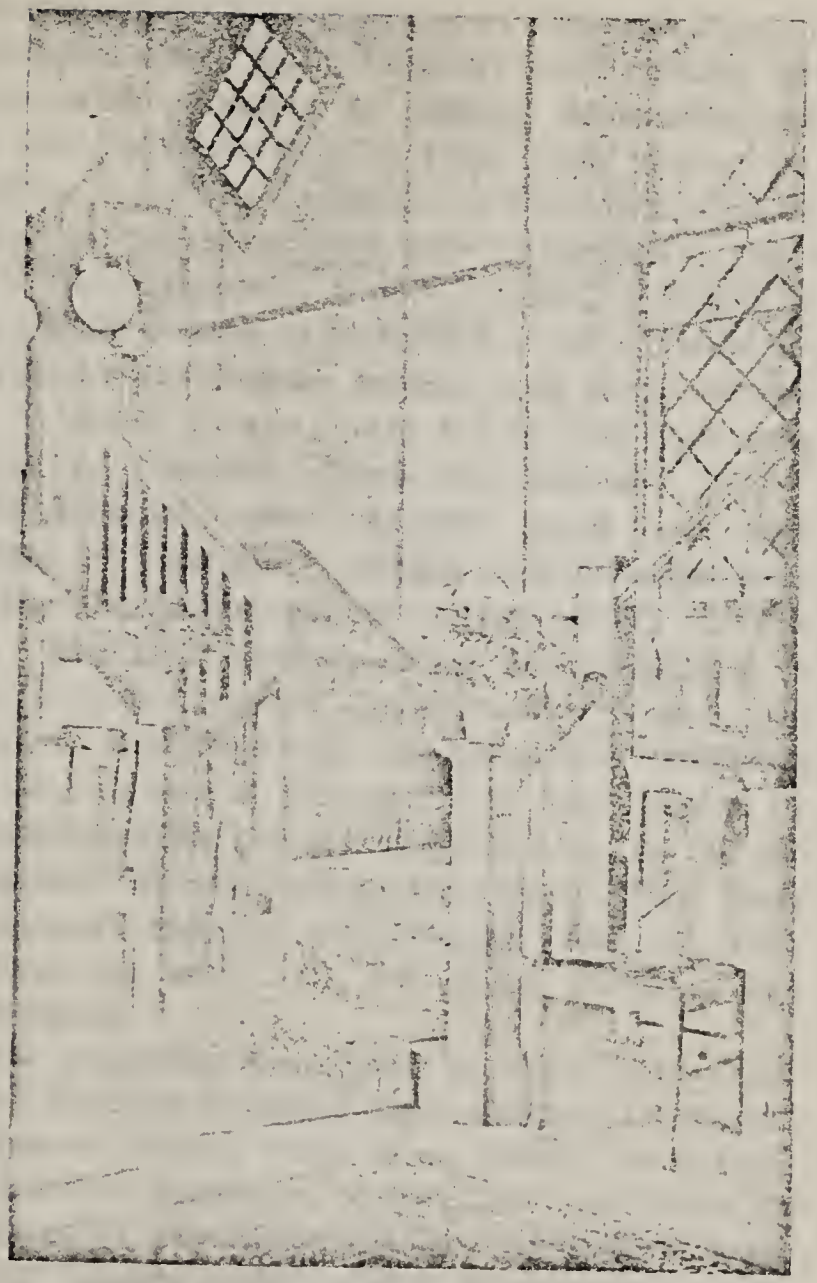
My home was in the west, so for many years it was only the summer vacations that were long enough to warrant the journey eastward; but after I entered college even the shortest respite from study found me at the farm in "Old Concord," as my father always called it, with a lingering accent, like a caress, on the "old."

Grandfather was quite a philosopher in his way. He knew all the people and all the ways of the historic old town; for a keen sense of humor, combined with practical good sense and the strictest integrity, drew old and young to him for advice. His reminiscences of a life beginning before the

last century began, were numerous and entertaining.

A wonderful memory united with a rare command of language made him a companion enjoyable to simple children and sought after by the wisest of the Concord sages. He could remember hearing the details of the Concord fight, April nineteenth, 1775, from eye-witnesses. His own father, John Hosmer, arrived at the bridge just in time to see the first man killed. This was Captain Isaac Davis of Acton, who had ridden hastily from his home to the Concord Bridge. He was struck through the heart by a bullet, jumped several feet into the air from his horse, and then fell back dead into the sluiceway. But of the fight I shall have more to say presently.

My grandfather, Edmund Hosmer, was born in 1778. He was the son of John Hosmer and Mary Vassall Prescott, who had been brought up in the Vassall House at Cambridge, where she lived with her grandfather, Colonel Vassall, until the Revolution. This Mary Prescott's father, Jonathan, had led the English forces at Louisburg. When her mother died, the little girl was sent to Colonel Vassall, builder of the Vassall House, Cambridge, afterward known as the Craigie House, and now as the Longfellow House. The Vassall House, with its estate of a hundred and twenty acres, was closely associated with the Colonial history of Boston and Cambridge. One of the Vassalls lived on Summer Street, where the Hovey store now stands.



STAIRWAY IN THE VASSALL-CRAIGIE-LONGFELLOW HOUSE, CAMBRIDGE

When the Vassalls sailed out of Boston harbor on Evacuation Day, Mary Prescott was visiting her grandmother Prescott in Groton, Massachusetts. The roads at that time of year being almost impassable, there was no chance of sending for her on such short notice, so they were compelled to leave her in New England. Colonel Vassall intended to send for her as soon as he settled in the old country, but this plan, for some reason, was never carried out. While at Groton, Mary fell in love with John Hosmer of Concord, whom she married.

The Hosmer name always stood for high qualities of strength, courage, and steadfastness, and was always conspicuous in the history of Concord. The first Hosmer sailed from England in April, 1653, on the good ship Elizabeth, bound from London to New England. He brought a certificate from the minister of Hawkhurst in Kent, signed by two justices of the peace conformable to the Church of England. James Hosmer, the first to reach these shores, was a clothier, twenty-eight years old; with him were his wife, Ann, two small children, and two servants.

In the following September he came from Cambridge with Peter Bulkeley, first minister of Concord, and Simon Willard (also from Kent), with their small band of followers, to form the plantation on the banks of the Musquetakid, the Indian name meaning "grassy river," which flows now as sluggishly as when Queen Tahatawan of Nashawtuc

ruled from Groton to Charlestown. The General Court ordered that the plantation to be formed by these pioneers should be six miles square and should be called "Concord."

These Kentish colonists were men of strong Saxon character. On a tablet in the crypt of Canterbury Cathedral is the following, written by Sylvester D. Willard in 1902, in memory of Simon Willard:

IN MEMORIAM

Major Simon Willard. Born 1604. Died 1676, exactly 100 years before the Declaration of Independence. A Kentish soldier and an early pioneer in the settlement of the British Colony of New England and America, 1634. He was the commander of the British forces against the hostile Indian tribes. He was distinguished in the military, legislative, and judicial services of the American Commonwealth until his death, aged seventy-two. Of Simon Willard's ancestors one was Provost of Canterbury, 1218, and another was Baron of Cinque Ports, 1377, and his descendants to the present day have held eminent positions in the United States.

The clerk of the Heraldry Office, London, when applied to for a coat of arms of the Hosmers, said, "There is no coat of arms for you, and if you were an Englishman you would not want one, for there were Hosmers in Kent before the Conquest, and at the battle of Hastings the men of Kent were the vanguard of King Harold."

"If," said Frank B. Sanborn, "the Hosmer ancestors failed to drive back the invaders at Hastings, their descendants made good the failure seven centuries later."

A few months before the "shot heard round the

world," Daniel Bliss, a Tory, in an eloquent address urged the citizens to be loyal to England. When he ceased speaking, a young man in a plain brown suit stood up and convincingly refuted the Tory's arguments. Upon inquiry as to his name, Bliss replied, "That is Hosmer, the mechanic, the most dangerous man in Concord, for he has all the young men at his back, and where he leads they will surely follow."

Bliss was right, for Hosmer was destined to be the man to form the minute men into line at the Bridge, rallying them on to the fight, while his cousin Abner, who fell a few minutes later, beat the drum.

When the British retreated from the North Bridge at Concord, two of their soldiers lay on the field. One was dead, the other only wounded. An American boy, in the excitement of the moment, killed the soldier with his axe, in spite of his appeals for mercy. John Hosmer saw this lad dispatch the British soldier, but he never would reveal his name, nor ever be induced to talk about it. Only one other person in the town knew his name, and that was the minister to whom the young man had come for comfort in the hours of remorse that followed his hasty act. Hawthorne embodies this incident in an unfinished story.

The monument to Edmund Hosmer's father, John, stands in the cemetery on Main Street. The original epitaph was written by Emerson, and it is a pity that the whole was not engraved upon the stone. It runs as follows:

Here lies the body of John Hosmer, born July sixth, 1752, and died February, 1836. A lover of independence, he respected always the freedom of others and that of his own children; an industrious and skilled mechanic, he was both able and willing to help himself. A liberal spender of his own earnings, he never coveted those of other men. Although in his youth in arms and one of the conquerors of Burgoyne, he was in all his life after a man of peace and had not a private enemy.

Here lies also the body of his wife, Mary, daughter of Jonathan Prescott of Halifax, Nova Scotia, a descendant of Peter Bulkeley, the first minister of Concord, a prudent and faithful wife and mother; she aided her husband by her affection and economy and shared with him the love and veneration of her ten children.

Edmund Hosmer was named after Edmund Burke, who had been an intimate friend of the family in England. Mary Vassall, his grandmother, had been presented at court, and I remember as a child handling pieces of her beautiful silk dresses. Silks in those days were made to last many years. Edmund Hosmer was fitted for Harvard at Westford Academy. He never entered Harvard, on account of his health. As several of the family had died from consumption, he was sent to sea for three months with a friend who owned a vessel. When he returned he decided to buy a farm. His first farm he owned jointly with a cousin, but that not proving satisfactory he sold out his share and bought in a different part of the town.

Edward Jarvis, in *Houses and People of Concord*, writes, "When I knew him he owned a cultivated farm on the Lincoln road. He was in the habit of reading much and thinking more, and talked freely.

He was much of a philosopher and was very suggestive in his conversation. He was retiring and never sought office, but the town sought him for school committee." On this farm he became a neighbor of Emerson. Later he bought the farm on Lowell road, where he died, and which is now occupied by his daughter, Miss Abby Hosmer. This farm on Lowell road was sold to John Hunt in April, 1701, by Adam Winthrop. The original house was torn down in 1853. It stood nearer the road, and beside its door was planted an ash tree which still flourishes. During the tearing down of the old house Thoreau was a frequent visitor. In it was a fireplace ten feet square, where the immense backlog was laid after being drawn in by the oxen. The present house was built by John Hunt for his son.

At one time Grandfather was superintendent of the Unitarian Sunday school. Years later Edward Hoar, while calling one afternoon said that as a boy the only time he ever enjoyed going to Sunday school was at that period, because Grandfather made the Bible stories so interesting that the characters stood out in vivid outline. I well remember, if I saw that he was worried about anything, how I would go to the book shelves and get Whittier's poems or an old reader which contained some fine selections and ask him to read. He would walk up and down the living room, forgetting his worries in his spirited rendering of the words.

I never heard anyone who could read so well

except the Reverend William Furness of Philadelphia, who loved Emerson and sometimes filled the Concord pulpit. The Lord's Prayer became illumined with the light of a new interpretation as he read it. We have the same fine reading now by Professor Charles Copeland of Harvard, who has that same gift of imparting new meaning even to very familiar passages.

Of my grandfather's ten children, six had taught in or near Concord. Miss Abby Hosmer served on the school committee. She and her sister, Miss Jane Hosmer, were well known as educators of unusual ability. Of their sister, Miss Eliza Hosmer, Emerson writes in his journals that she was his ideal of all that the finest type of teacher should be.

Grandfather was absolutely without fear. Even death never had the slightest terror for him. A story about him well illustrates his fearlessness. When he first bought a new farm, a neighbor complained that the line fence encroached on his land. "Perhaps it does. I will have it surveyed to be sure," said Grandfather. The survey proved that the latter should have several feet over the line. The neighbor was very angry, and soon after as he was driving home he met Grandfather driving in the opposite direction. "If you weren't on that team I would horsewhip you," he shouted. Grandfather, always nimble as a boy, leaped to the ground and said, "Now don't let that stop you!" The man glared but drove on. The story leaked out because a farmer's boy who had been working unobserved

nearby overheard the conversation and thought it too good to keep to himself.

In Dr. Emerson's book about his father, *Emerson In Concord,* he writes concerning Grandfather: "Mr. Edmund Hosmer, a farmer of the older New England type, thrifty and sturdy, conservative, yet independent, was Mr. Emerson's neighbor for many years, and during that time his adviser and helper in his rustic affairs. For his character and opinion Mr. Emerson had great respect, and in his walks he liked to go by Mr. Hosmer's farm and find him ploughing in his field where they would have a chat on matters of agriculture, politics, or philosophy. One of these conversations is reported in the *Dial* under the title *Agriculture of Massachusetts.*

Hawthorne describes him thus: "We found him walking in his fields, a short and sturdy personage of middle age, with a face of shrewd and kind expression and manners of natural courtesy."

In the work on Thoreau by the Frenchman, Leon Bazalgette, Grandfather is spoken of three times. On page 170, in referring to the framing of the shack, on page 179, as follows: "On Sunday it is dear Edmund Hosmer . . . who comes in to look on his colleague, the farmer of Walden." On page 150: "The pipe and frock of Edmund Hosmer, that shrewd farmer who knows what the earth is made of, make up for all these peasants." (In those days farmers wore long blue homespun frocks, not unlike the modern artist's smock.)

Thoreau writes of him: "Edmund Hosmer, last of

the farmers worthy of mention. Human life may be transitory and full of trouble, but the perennial mind, whose survey extends from that spring to this spring, from Columella[1] to Hosmer is superior to change. I will identify myself with that which will not die with Columella and will not die with Hosmer."

[1]Columella, Lucius Junius Moderatus, the most famous writer on agriculture among the ancients. Born at Cadiz in the first century A.D. Wrote twelve books on gardening, *De Re Rustica*, one of which is in verse. Also a book on the cultivation of trees. Best edition is by Gesner, Leipsic, 1735.

CHAPTER II.

CONCORD NEIGHBORS

CONCORD retained the sturdy uprightness of her Puritan settlers to a remarkable degree. The large roomy jail with its whitewashed walls was not apt to harbor any very hardened criminals. The story is told of the lawyer who had called at the jail to see a man whom he had been retained to defend. The jailor told him he must come again as the prisoner had gone huckleberrying with his children. Another story is of the judge, who on being informed that the prisoners had all been sent to the meadow to cock hay on account of a threatened thunder storm, immediately adjourned the court until the haying was over.

There were many stories Grandfather used to tell of the prominent citizens and clergymen of the town; such as of old Doctor Ripley, Emerson's step-grandfather, Squire Hoar (father of Judge Hoar and Senator Hoar) in whom the strong intellectual and moral worth of the town was typically personified; of the early struggles of the Alcotts, the Concord sojourn of George William Curtis, of Margaret Fuller, Madame Ripley, and many others less noted.

Most of the clergymen of those days were so individual in character that they formed striking figures against the general background. Grand-

father often quoted their sayings. One particularly fine passage which Grandfather loved has lingered in my memory: "When thou passest through the sunshine of prosperity, rejoice. When thou lingerest under the cloud of adversity, be silent and adore." Of another clergyman he said: "When I last met him and inquired after his health, he answered, 'I inhabit a frail tenement, weatherbeaten, open to the winds, and alas there be none who can repair it, but thank God I shall soon pass to a mansion incorruptible, immortal.' "

For many years the most trusted lawyer in Eastern Massachusetts was Samuel Hoar. Among his contemporaries at the bar there were men more learned in the law and more gifted in speech. But the farmers of Middlesex called him "the Squire," as though he alone deserved to be designated by the definite article. His lofty and spotless character won for him this prefix of respect and faith. Even the boys believed and looked up to "Squire Hoar." A poor widow, almost the humblest person in the parish, lost her only child, a little boy, by drowning. She told how the boy, the evening before the accident, spoke of what he meant to do for his mother when he became a man, and how he would try to be as good as Squire Hoar. The common people reverenced the man who, on his return from Congress, would sit down on a wooden bench in the town house and talk to his neighbors as one of them. There was nothing, in their opinion, which "the Squire" couldn't do if he made up his mind to do it.

At one time he was much interested in enforcing the laws against travelling on Sunday. Some of his less puritanical neighbors were astonished at his vigorous efforts, but they admitted that he was very efficient in making Sunday a day of rest. The great September gale of 1815 came along, doing much damage. An old farmer near Concord was gazing ruefully at the destruction of his woodlot. "I wish," said he to a friend, "that this tornado had happened on Sunday." "Why so?" "Because I should like to have seen, as it travelled through Concord, whether Sam Hoar would have tried to stop it."

Although a Channing Unitarian, he was a great friend of Dr. Lyman Beecher. When Dr. Beecher, eighty-one years old, heard that Squire Hoar was dying, he immediately started for Concord. He arrived too late, but said quietly, "I am sure he has passed safely on. He was indeed an Israelite, in whom there was no guile."

In the old rum days, Dr. Bartlett, the village doctor, a man of strong convictions and great courage, opposed the use of liquor. His opponents took off the nut from a wheel, slit the curtains of his chaise, and cut off his horse's tail. The doctor rode through the streets for a long time in that style as a constant reflection on their meanness.

There were many men and women in Concord above the average in their appreciation of good literature. Such was Madame Ripley, who peeled the potatoes with her hands and rocked the cradle

with her foot, while teaching Greek and Latin to conditioned undergraduates of Harvard.

Concord had for one winter the honor of being a college town. The equipment and rooms of Harvard being drafted for the use of the continental army, the college was moved to Concord in the fall of 1775 and remained there until the evacuation of Boston in March.

For many years afterwards students on probation were sent to Concord to make up their deficiencies. The town even in those early days had a literary flavor of its own, for not only in the Old Manse, but in other houses were found men and women of high culture. There were women in the town who read the classics long before women's colleges were thought of. When Emerson came to Concord he found more than one woman who read Euripides and other writers in the original.

The lovely Elizabeth Hoar was always much beloved by Mr. Emerson as the fiancée of his brother. When I knew her years after Charles Emerson's death, a slight atmosphere of sadness clung to her, like a delicate perfume. She used to say that she must live the most beautiful life she could, or Charles might get way ahead of her.

In Edward Simmons' book, *From Seven to Seventy*, he speaks of the death of the Blood sisters. An old inhabitant of Concord tells me that Mr. Simmons must have been misinformed, for the Blood sisters died several months apart, left a bequest to the town, and were well looked after by

the neighbors. Their brother Perez was interested in astronomy. He asked Henry Thoreau to get a book for him from Harvard College. When Thoreau got the volume, the librarian asked, "Who in your town reads a book like that?" When Thoreau told him, the librarian said, "Tell him to send to me for any books that he would like to have."

There was one man whom I met at various houses, sometimes at our own, and I loved to catch up with him and share for a bit his walk, he was so unassumingly wise. Sometimes I would offer, as the guests were leaving, to help him on with his overcoat, which offer he always refused. But he never forgot, when the coat was on, to stop and shake hands and wish me a cordial good night. He never made his name so well known in the world at large, but he was as typical a character in his way as any of Concord's more noted men. You felt instinctively that he was a superior soul, but his wisdom was so enshrined by his modesty, he seemed so contented in his own sphere, that you never thought to ask, had he discovered this or that, or was he famous in any way, but only left his presence deeply thankful that in this restless, unsatisfied world, in the midst of its ambitious, jostling crowds, you had been blessed in knowing this man, contented to do his work, in his happy way, unheeding and unseeking the praise of man. Tenderly sacred to all who knew him is the memory of George Bradford.

Concord had its quota of eccentric people. There

was a man named Bent who swore so vigorously that he was dubbed "Hell Bent." Once a man thought he would make some money, so he dug out of the woods some rhododendrons and peddled them through the town to be planted. Bent bought some. The plants all died, being either too old or too dry, and everyone found much fault. Ever afterwards Bent referred to them as "those rhododamndamns."

Such was the anti-slavery spirit in Concord that even Mary Rice, a little spinster, planted lilies on the grave of John Jack. John Jack was a slave whose epitaph has become famous throughout the world. It was written by Daniel Bliss, brother-in-law of Reverend William Emerson. The present stone is a reproduction of the original one.

God wills us free . . . man wills us slaves . . .
I will as God wills, God's will be done.
Here lies the body of
John Jack
A native of Africa, who died
March 1773 aged about sixty years.
Though born in a land of slavery,
He was born free,
Though he lived in a land of liberty
He lived a slave;
Till by his honest though stolen labors
He acquired the source of slavery
Which gave him his freedom,
Though not long before
Death the grand tyrant
Gave him his final emancipation
And put him on a footing with kings.
Though a slave to vice
He practiced those virtues
Without which kings are but slaves.

Concord was a pioneer station in the famous

THE HOUSE ON THE HILL

underground railway between the South and Canada. The anti-slavery women said that Thoreau was a great help in time of need. He met and calmed the poor fugitives. It is said that many a runaway slave was hidden in the shack at Walden and driven under cover of darkness by Thoreau himself to the next safety post. Emerson was always in sympathy with the movement, and Frank B. Sanborn a most active worker. Mr. Frank Pierce tells the following story of the Concord spirit. "The marshals came for Sanborn at night. It was after ten o'clock when they stopped at his house, and the way they did it was this. They held out a letter, addressed to Mr. Sanborn, and when he extended his hand to take it, they clapped the handcuffs upon him. They had a hack and a pair of horses there, ready to take him to Boston, where a ship was waiting to carry him south to Harper's Ferry. But Sanborn was a big man, almost seven feet tall, with the longest legs I have ever seen. Every time they started to get him through the door of the hack he would thrust out his long legs, this way and that, and they could not manage it. At the same time a woman who was either a neighbor or a guest in his house, had armed herself with a long horse whip. Every time they tried to get him into the hack, she slashed the horses with the whip and of course they reared and plunged. While this was going on, word of the affair spread like wildfire, and the bell of the old church was rung to call the townsfolk together. It wasn't but a little while before a

big crowd of Concord citizens gathered at the Sanborn home, and they came to the rescue. I was only a boy then, perhaps twelve years old, but I remember it all perfectly. The crowd handled those marshals pretty roughly, and the old judge in the town got out a writ of habeas corpus, to take Sanborn away from his captors. And so they never got him to Harper's Ferry after all. Had they done so they would have hanged him just as they did John Brown."

The excitement was so intense that Rufus Hosmer, a cousin of my grandfather's, dropped dead from apoplexy, an unexpected victim to the abolitionist cause.

CHAPTER III.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

OFTEN in our walks and drives we met a tall, thin man, who greeted us with a radiant smile, and usually paused for a few minutes' talk. Everyone who has ever seen Emerson will recall vividly that wonderful lighting of the face when he smiled. It was almost uncanny. It seemed, as Oliver Wendell Holmes put it, to proclaim him the translated inhabitant of some higher sphere.

Emerson's birthplace was the parsonage of the First Church, Boston, situated at the corner of Chauncey and Summer Streets. It is hard to realize now, as one walks through that crowded thoroughfare, that in 1803 there was, adjoining the house, a garden and orchard of several acres. At the age of eight he lost his father and Mrs. Emerson moved to Beacon Street where the Boston Athenaeum now stands. Here she kept boarders and Ralph drove the cow to pasture on Boston Common. At ten we find him in the Latin School. His mother could afford an extra fire only in the living room, so Ralph Waldo was often obliged to study in a cold room.

In later years he used to say that Latin always retained for him a very distinct odor of wool, as he used to study it so much wrapped up in a woolen blanket. At eighteen he was a senior at Harvard.

Here he was not very conspicuous for his poetical talent, being chosen class poet after seven others had refused the somewhat irksome honor. In prose he succeeded in obtaining second prize only in the competition for the Boylston prizes. After leaving college he taught school at Chelmsford and at Cambridge. Among his pupils were the late Judge Abbott and John Holmes, brother to Oliver Wendell Holmes. Judge Abbott writes of him, "He was very grave and quiet, never punished, but there was something fascinating about him that held the boys in subjection. He had a way of looking at those who did wrong and simply saying, 'Oh, sad!' that effectively shamed them."

It was natural for Emerson to turn his thoughts to the ministry. From Peter Bulkeley, the first minister of Concord, to himself, the line was unbroken save by his great-grandfather, Edward Emerson, who came near it, being a worthy deacon of the Newbury Church. This Edward Emerson was noted for rare good temper. There is a family tradition that he was never known to complain but once and that was when he remarked mildly that his daughter's dumplings were sometimes harder than needful.

Emerson studied Unitarianism under Dr. Channing. In 1829 he was called to the Second Church, Boston. This same year he married Ellen Tucker, a woman of lovely character but very fragile constitutionally, who died of consumption within two years. That her memory was tenderly cherished

may be seen in the fact that after Emerson married again he named his first child Ellen Tucker Emerson, and that one of his son's children was also given the same name. During his ministry in Boston Emerson took an active part in public affairs, was on the school board, was chaplain of the State Senate, lectured on anti-slavery, and supported benevolent work generally. When Father Taylor, the energetic Methodist preacher, was building his famous Bethel for sailors at the North End, Emerson gave such cordial and effective support to the scheme that he and Father Taylor became fast friends. Once some of the latter's Methodist parishioners rallied him on being so intimate with a Unitarian and said, "You know Emerson must have to go to a certain unmentionable bad place." "It does look so," said Father Taylor, "but I am sure if Emerson goes there he will so change the climate that emigration will set that way."

The same preacher used also to say that whatever Emerson's religious faith might be, in his daily living he was the most Christlike man he had ever known.

Being troubled with doubts as to his duty in administering the Lord's Supper, Emerson resigned from active work in the church and was compelled to seek some other means of support.

Emerson lived on Chardon Street when he was pastor of the Second Church. One woman was in the habit of seeing him during the week and dis-

cussing the sermon of the preceding Sunday. After the sermon in which he announced his belief that the communion should be spiritual only, the sermon which severed his connection with his parish, she was silent regarding it. Finally he asked her directly for her opinion. She shook her head sadly as she replied, "Ye have taken away my Lord, and I know not where ye have laid Him." He used to say in after life, "That was one of the most touching comments on my decision."

After leaving his church he went to Europe visiting many famous places and celebrated men. The impressions received there are embodied in his book called *English Traits.*

Upon his return from Europe he entered the field of public lecturing. This with his writing was his occupation and support until old age. He became a resident of the Old Manse in Concord. This house, afterward made famous throughout the world by Hawthorne, was built for Emerson's grandfather, Reverend William Emerson. It was then occupied by Reverend Doctor Ripley, Emerson's step-grandfather, who had succeeded Reverend Emerson as pastor of the Concord Church and had married his widow. In this Old Manse Emerson wrote his first book called *Nature,* and in the same room some years later Hawthorne wrote *Mosses From An Old Manse. Nature* was published anonymously, but its style betrayed its author. When someone inquired who wrote, *Nature,* a wit replied, "God and Waldo Emerson."

In 1835 Emerson married his second wife, Lydia Jackson of Plymouth, and began his life in the house where he lived the rest of his days and where he died in 1882. Mrs. Emerson wished to live in Plymouth, but he said Concord semed best suited for his work. In its fields and woods, its hills and quiet river, he found fruitful sources of inspiration for a poet and philosopher, and he was never tired of their beauties.

My own first recollection of Emerson was at a children's party. An afternoon at the Emerson's homestead was always hailed with delight. Charades and games were played to our hearts' content. Then refreshments were served and we were sent away with flowers and some souvenir of the day. This first party that I remember was impressed upon my mind by the following circumstances. I had been in the habit of overloading my pockets with treasures of childhood's fancy. Mending proved fruitless and scolding useless, so to punish me every pocket was sewed up. Just at that time came the party. When I started for home my hands were so full that Mr. Emerson suggested that I put something into a pocket. Judge of my shame when I stammered I had none. "What!" he exclaimed, "a child without a pocket?" and he hastily summoned his daughter to see what must be done with the peculiar child without pockets. From this time on I frequently met Mr. Emerson and my love and admiration for him increased with each succeeding year.

When some noted person came to visit him, if he could persuade him to stay, invitations were sent out for a conversation, and these conversations became one of the most delightful features of the village life. Emerson delighted to bring his friends together in this way. The subject of the evening was always something especially adapted to bring out the talent of the guest of honor. For instance, if a man like Walt Whitman, or Leighton, or Arthur Hugh Clough, were present it would be some poem, often an unpublished one, which was read by the poet. If a man of science or philosophy, such was the topic. If a famous preacher, it was some religious or spiritual thought, and so on. A general discussion always followed, where questions were asked and ideas were freely exchanged. It is pleasant to recall this interchange of thought in which so many gifted minds took part. Alcott, Thoreau, Sanborn, and Channing were always ready to add their share. Mr. Emerson's attitude was mainly that of a modest listener.

Mrs. Emerson was usually present, and made a most pleasing picture with her fair face and picturesque attire. On these occasions she wore a black velvet basque and a full skirt of silk or cashmere. I never saw her without the soft, white illusion cap, with its broad illusion ends tied under the chin with baby blue ribbon. She always sat in a straight, high-back chair, over which was thrown a baby blue shawl, in case she should feel a draft. This attire, with her snow white hair and wonder-

fully clear complexion, made her seem very beautiful to me. The portrait in the hall is a fine likeness, as I remember her.

She often took part in the conversations and was very bright in her questions and answers. I remember being at the house one day for the noon meal. I had been discussing the divinity of Jesus with a Unitarian, and I was curious to know what Mr. Emerson would say on the subject, so I appealed to him. While he was thinking in his meditative way, and I was waiting, Mrs. Emerson spoke quickly, "Why, that's easy, for the Bible answers it perfectly. Doesn't it say, 'To us He gave His spirit with measure, but to Him without measure.' Why need one seek further?" I looked at Mr. Emerson, who smiled and nodded, as though he thought it a good answer.

In her earlier years, Mrs. Emerson at one time had a Sunday school class on Sunday afternoons at her home, for her own and the neighboring children. Every one had to learn Bible verses and poems. Grandfather always insisted that his children should not be remiss in this. There was no rocking allowed; feet must be on the floor. Manners were a vital part of the Emerson household.

Mrs. Emerson was very generous as well as beautiful. The sick and poor of the town were always remembered by her, if there was any way in which she could help. She loved the garden, and it was never neglected while she could per-

1753043

sonally look after it, and she loved to be generous, too, in giving flowers away.

She was remarkably sympathetic, even toward animals. Once Miss Ellen tried to drive a rat from the dining room. The frightened creature at length took refuge up the fireplace. Ellen stuffed up papers to keep it there for the night. In the morning, when she pulled out the papers to give it another chance of escaping, if it were still there, she found a doughnut with them. Mrs. Emerson confessed that she had added the titbit in case the rat might be hungry.

The children were fond of her, even if they were somewhat in awe of her. Sometimes she would get them to do errands for her. One day she asked Uncle Henry to go up to town for a gallon of oil. On the way home he stumbled and fell and some of the oil was spilled. He was a little fellow, and scared, so he left the oil by the wayside and ran home. The next day Mrs. Emerson came to the schoolhouse door and told the teacher she would like to see Henry Hosmer, so he had to face her. "Now, Henry," she said, "I wasn't so sorry for the oil that was lost, nor even for the delay you made me in not bringing it, but I was sorry, very sorry for your cowardice in running away."

Emerson was also very particular about good form. He never allowed his family to talk about their dreams at breakfast. He said you should come from sleep as from the gods. So he wanted the children to be calm in the morning. He had a

most happy way of managing them. If Edward were restless or wilful at the table, he would send him out to see if the front gate were shut. Dr. Emerson said he used to wonder for a long time why his father should be so suddenly anxious about that gate. When the school children asked for chesnuts from his trees, Emerson would say, "Just a few," because, he said, if he put a limit on them, the nuts would keep their charm.

Once a man (not a Quaker) called who insisted on keeping on his hat. Mr. Emerson tried several times to induce him to remove the hat, all in vain. So he finally said, "Very well, then we will walk in the garden." And the visitor never got beyond the front hall.

Emerson was very fond of helping young people, lending them books, or assisting them in any other way possible. Perhaps he remembered his own longing for books in his youth. Once he borrowed some books from a lending library, and was reproved by his aunt, Mary Moody Emerson, for spending his mother's pennies. So from that time on he hired no more books until he had his own money to pay for them.

This aunt, although a vital influence in his life, was a very individual character. Many stories are current of her great bluntness. Once Mrs. Thoreau called, wearing pink ribbons. Miss Emerson sat and conversed for a while with closed eyes. Finally she asked Mrs. Thoreau if she had noticed that her eyes were shut. "That is because I don't like to

see a woman of your age guilty of such levity in dress." On another occasion a young lady dressed up in new finery came in to show off to Miss Emerson. All the satisfaction she got was to receive the remark, "Well, I always thought you were a pumpkin and now I know you are a green one at that." Some women were talking one evening at a literary gathering; suddenly Miss Emerson leaned forward and remarked audibly to them, "Stop that chattering, I want to hear these men talk sense."

Yet with all her eccentric ways her advice was sound and her intellectual grasp of fundamental values was an asset to those young people who had the sense to realize this.

For many years a district school stood opposite the Emerson homestead. The sage had a friendly way with children, but they were never allowed to take liberties. They must ask for nuts or apples if they wanted any. One day some of the boys had a good time playing in his hay cocks which were soon scattered over the ground. When Mr. Emerson noticed them he stood by until the cocks were put together again as best the boys could, while he explained that it was unfair to the gardener to undo his work.

I happened to be the last teacher at this school, for the next year the central school was completed and the district schools were closed. I found no one more interested in the welfare of the children under my charge than the Emerson neighbors across the way. They were always invited to come

over on special days when the children prepared declamations and songs, and they often came, never with any apparent condescension on their part, but always with an attitude of genuine interest in whatever was done.

Sometimes when the Emersons gave a party for the children of the school or of the Sunday school, I was asked to assist in amusing them. One of the favorite games was to divide them into two groups for charades. One group went into the dining room to choose the word which they were to act out, while the other group stayed in the drawing room for the guessing. Mr. Emerson's favorite place was at the extreme end of the front hall, where he could see the acting in the drawing room and watch the merry little faces as they passed from one room to another. That was also where he usually stood when the children trooped up to wish him goodbye.

Mr. Emerson's favorite dish was apple pie, which he had for breakfast and often ate the first thing. When on his way to California, when the rest of the party refused pie at a restaurant, he naively inquired, "But, my friends, what is pie for?" On the same journey he offered to get some refreshments for one of the ladies, when the train made a five minute stop, and soon reappeared at the car door with a cup of coffee and a huge wedge of pie.

Emerson went into the woods to listen and then wrote what he heard. He took notes wherever he went. He seldom wrote at a desk, Miss Ellen told me, but on a pad held on his knees.

His first book, *Nature,* was the most challenging of all his works, because it struck a new note in American philosophy. Among some few thinkers it found instant recognition, but it took twelve years to sell the first small edition. Whenever a new book of his was published, he brought an autographed copy to grandfather, and I well remember seeing as a child this little thin first book, *Nature.*

On the afternoon of Grandfather's funeral he came into the room where the relatives and neighbors were seated. He had, although somewhat feeble at the time, walked the mile distance from his home to bear witness to the long years of their friendship.

Uncle John and Uncle Henry were glad in later years to show their appreciation of Mr. Emerson by helping him to find places to lecture when he went West. In Detroit, after Uncle John had introduced him, Mr. Emerson said, "I am pleased to be introduced by the son of my old neighbor in Concord."

One day in more recent years, Mr. Horace Traubel called upon me. We talked about Emerson and Whitman. When Emerson visited Whitman, he accosted him, "How do you do, Mr. Whitman?" who immediately replied, "How are you, Waldo?" Mr. Traubel thought this showed Whitman's greater democracy.

Emerson was offended when Whitman sent him a volume of *Leaves of Grass* on the cover of which was printed in gold letters Emerson's greeting after

the first edition had appeared. He thought that Whitman should have asked his permission to quote in so public a manner from a personal letter. This annoyance did not annul their friendship or keep them from visiting each other. On Whitman's last talk at a gathering in Concord, Emerson (this was after his memory for names had failed) leaned forward to a cousin of mine and said, "What is the name of this poet?" "That," she replied, "is Mr. Whitman, Walt Whitman." Afterwards Mr. Emerson spoke to him and invited him to dinner. Whitman, possibly doubting whether Emerson had quite placed him, asked Miss Ellen if he should come. "Certainly, if Father asked you." So he went and Emerson was silent during the meal. That was not so strange, as he seldom spoke at meals when I was there, unless appealed to directly. His life-long habit of listening grew on him naturally in his later years.

I wish I could convey an impression of the lofty serenity which met one with such gentle mien. From talks with those who knew him in his younger years, I realize he was much more vigorous in speech and much more intent on seeking new knowledge of truth, as well as imparting his own thought, but I remember only the gentle dignity that wrapped him round like an invisible but beautiful garment.

Once in his later years, Emerson took me into his study and talked with me for a long time about his books, giving me entertaining accounts of visits

with many of his contemporary writers. He took down a volume of Ruskin and said, "There is a man whose works I used to delight in. One of my anticipated pleasures was to see Ruskin in his own home, which we did. But no matter who or what was the topic suggested, Ruskin had only words of disparagement and my visit was a deep disappointment and I have never opened a book of his since." Miss Ellen told me about it afterwards. She said that the first part of the visit was very pleasant, for Ruskin showed them his wonderful collection of opals. After they went to the library and began to talk about men and books, Ruskin had only words of criticism. Miss Emerson could see that the critical spirit was making her father restless. Finally he rose to go, and after they left, Emerson said, "I couldn't endure it a moment longer."

One day in the library Emerson showed me his oldest book, a Dante dated 1596, a gift from Carlyle. The next oldest date was 1605. There was a very rare first edition of Tennyson, probably the only one in America, as Tennyson had called in as many as possible of that issue.

Of Plato he was an ardent enthusiast. He spoke of the revelation any man received in studying Plato; who had condensed, he thought, in his philosophy most of the wisdom found in all the ages preceding him.

George Herbert's poems were very much loved by him, and many of them he and his family knew by heart. Arthur Hugh Clough was another favor-

ite, and his long friendship for Carlyle, whose pessimism contrasted so greatly with his own optimism, is well known. He stated that Carlyle's special power lay in the strength of his statement.

Sometimes the name of a town or author escaped his memory. If possible, I supplied it, and then he would go on as easily as ever. If a word failed him he would often supply it with an idea. Umbrella was a stumbling block, so he would say, "You know the thing your friends borrow and forget to return." Or the word "physician," which he expressed as "the man that tried to make you well."

His loss of memory seemed to me less a loss of mind than a gradual withdrawal from the material and worldly into an inner realm. The outer symbol failed more easily than in many, because of his long habit of introspective thinking, but to the end his presence was a benediction. My last meeting with him was a few weeks before the close of his life. We were both in the village store, waiting for the late afternoon mail. There was quite a crowd there, as this was before free delivery, and the store was a meeting place for many of the villagers. Mr. Emerson had made some purchases and then turned from the counter and gone toward the office. I noticed that he had forgotten to pick up his pocket-book after paying for the articles bought. So I waited till his letters had been given him, and then went forward and greeted him. He gave me as always his welcoming smile, and when I presented the pocket-book I was rewarded with another, the

last smile I was ever to receive from him whom in my humble way I had for years so deeply revered.

A few weeks later I attended his funeral. A special train went from Boston to Concord for the services. When we reached Concord I took a public carriage for the church. Dr. James Putnam and Professor William James of Harvard rode with me. When we reached the church it was over-crowded, as were the steps and the adjacent grounds. The two men went into the right hand door and were admitted for reserved seats. I edged my way through the crowd to the left hand steps and waited for the procession of relatives and intimate friends to come from the services at the house. Then I slipped in with my family and sat in the pew kept for us. The two pews ahead of us were filled with noted people. At the end of one sat George William Curtis, for many years editor of *The Easy Chair* in *Harper's Magazine*. I was glad to see his fine face, because I had for a long time read chapters to Grandmother from a Bible which he had autographed and given to Grandmother when he left Concord. There were also the James brothers and other writers, Oliver Wendell Holmes and contemporary poets. Judge Hoar, Emerson's friend of long standing, gave in eloquent language the funeral oration, and Mr. Alcott read an ode composed for the occasion. It was with difficulty that the speakers at times controlled their voices, so keenly did they feel the personal loss. At the close, the audience filed by the casket. Daniel French, the

sculptor, had draped the body as a statue, which well suited Emerson's classical features. And so Concord said farewell to her beloved sage.

Emerson's fame had made Concord a Mecca for literary visitors. Men of note came from all over the world to visit the Concord sage. They had learned to admire him through his writings and eagerly sought to meet him face to face. I doubt if anyone ever went away without feeling repaid by his glimpse of Emerson's home life. Never was there a writer whose life flowed more in harmony with his ideals. As he believed, so he wrote; as he thought, so he lived. Some great men are as disappointing at first sight as Niagara Falls is to many. Not so Mr. Emerson. He was a prophet not without honor even in his own town. The simplicity of his life gave little occasion for criticism, while his serene and dignified personality won esteem, not only from strangers, but from his fellow-townsmen, an esteem which increased and deepened with the lengthening years of his life. With his tall, spare figure, clothed in a long black coat, or in early years a shawl, his head slightly forward, as though his body lagged behind his intellect, to the poetic or idealist youth of the town he typified a reincarnated Dante. When an old farmer was asked if he understood Emerson, he replied, "No, but my daughters swear by him." The young, better than the old, sensed his kinship with eternal youth, which he tells us is kept by communion with things above.

Peering intently into the faces of all he met,

keenly observant of nature, wresting from Oriental literature its mystical meaning, Emerson was pre-eminently a truth-seeker. This attitude of his mind is well embodied in the sitting statue by Daniel French, which is in the Concord library. The sculptor has tried, he tells us, "to fix the elusive, illuminated expression of his face" and "to perpetuate the peculiar sidewise thrust of the head on the neck that was characteristic of him, conveying an impression of mental searching." Mr. French, being a Concord boy, was well acquainted with his subject. When quite a young man, he had made a head of Emerson, going each day for a month to the homestead, where one of the ground floor rooms had been turned into a temporary studio. The posing couldn't have been too strenuous, for the sage remarked, "This is as easy as sleeping." When the bust was nearing completion, he said, "The trouble is that the more it resembles me the worse it looks." Of a head made by another sculptor he replied, when asked how he liked it, "It looks as harmless as a parsnip." After the head which was the model for the library statue was done, Mr. Emerson said, "That is the face I shave."

In Mr. Emerson's early career his philosophy was made the subject of ridicule, banter, and often severe criticism. After his address to the senior class of the Divinity School of Harvard, delivered Sunday evening, July fifteenth, 1834, a bitter storm of protest arose. He was called heretic and dangerous radical, but he never answered the charges put forth.

Once only did he ever allude to them. That was in a letter to the Reverend Henry Ware, formerly associated with him in his church. He says, "In the present droll posture of my affairs, when I see myself, suddenly raised into the importance of a heretic, I am very uneasy when I advert to the supposed duties of such a personage, who is to make good his thesis against all comers. I certainly shall do no such thing. I shall read what you and other good men write, as I have always done —glad when you speak my thoughts, and skipping the page which has nothing for me. I shall go on, just as before, seeing whatever I can, and telling what I see; and, I suppose, with the same fortune that has hitherto attended me; the joy of finding that my abler and better brothers, who work with the sympathy of society, loving and beloved, do now and then unexpectedly confirm my perceptions, and find my nonsense is only their own thought in motley."

The dean of the divinity school remarked after this address that what was not folly in it was atheism. As we walk past Emerson Hall on the Harvard campus, we realize that thought has gone forward since such words could be uttered about the serene sage of Concord. Theodore Parker had a wider vision, for he used to thank God for three things—the sun, the moon, and Ralph Waldo Emerson. Reverend Charles T. Ames well expressed the sanity of his philosophy when he said that Emerson's conservatism never blocked the wheels of

progress, nor did his radicalism ever lack reasonableness.

All good causes had his sympathy, and his voice was a clear as a trumpet; whether to praise Charles Sumner, denounce Daniel Webster, or raise funds to preserve the Old South Church.

When a woman wrote to him for sympathy because her son was so discontented with present day society, he bravely wrote back, "I hope he will never get over it."

Emerson believed in all true reform. He was the first American scholar to write and lecture against slavery. He did not at first favor war, but when the Fugitive Slave Law was passed (the law for which Thoreau refused to pay taxes) he writes boldly, "It must be abrogated, but while it stands it must be disobeyed. Let us not lie nor steal nor help to steal, but let us not call stealing any fine names such as union or patriotism." He was aroused to such indignation that he was moved for the first and, I believe, the only time in his life to personal denunciation, and that of no less a man than Daniel Webster. He believed the state's main duty was to instruct the ignorant, to supply the poor with work and with good guidance.

In regard to woman suffrage he says, "On important questions:—whether the government shall be representative or democratic, whether men shall be holden in bondage or shall be roasted alive and eaten as in Typee, or hunted with bloodhounds as in this country, whether men shall be hanged for

stealing or shall be hanged at all, whether the unlimited sale of cheap liquor shall be allowed, women would give, I suppose, as intelligent a vote as the voters of Boston or New York. If we refuse them a vote on their demanding it, we shall, of course, refuse to tax them."

On reform in education he complains that we are using antiquated methods. "We are students of words; we are shut up in schools and colleges and come out at last with a bag of wind, a memory of words, and do not know a thing. We cannot use our minds or our eyes. Some thousands are graduated at our colleges every year and the persons who can read Latin and Greek at forty can all be counted on your hand. I never met ten."

He admired practical people. Once they had a young calf which refused all efforts to make it drink. An Irish maid in the kitchen, hearing of the difficulty in the barn, said, "Oh, that's easy." Going to the animal she wet her finger in milk and inserted it in the calf's mouth, till it began to suck. Emerson remarked, "I like people that can do things."

Emerson never neglected the common duties of every day life as he found it, much as he loved communion with higher things. He even tried farming, but concluded that it required too much time, saying that when his vegetables flourished his writing languished.

An old Irish laborer who had worked on the place said, "Emerson was no man at all for making

money. He was just great on that ere stuff, philosophy, he wuz. Well, I'm thinkin' as how God made ivery man good fer sumthin' or other, and there ain't no two of us alike, ye mind."

This philosophy was well illustrated by his words when an Adventist told him that the world would end in a week, "Well, I dare say we shall do very well without it."

His panacea for all measures needing reform was love. He writes: "Love would put a new face on this weary old world." "Love will creep where it cannot run, will accomplish by imperceptible methods that which force could never achieve. This great, overgrown, dead Christendom still keeps alive the name of one lover of mankind, but one day all men will be lovers and every calamity will be dissolved in the universal sunshine."

He expresses the thought also in a lecture for the relief of John Brown's family: "For the arch-abolitionist, older than Brown, and older than the Shenandoah mountains, is love, whose other name is justice, which was before Alfred, before Lycurgus, before Slavery, and will be after it."

Mr. S. D. Moxley, a Unitarian minister, tells the following experience with Emerson:

"A good many years ago, when a young theological student, I supplied a church for some months in northern New York. During the summer, Ralph Waldo Emerson was invited to deliver a lecture in a village about twelve miles from the town where I was stopping. With many of my neighbors I went

by special train to hear him. During the lecture he made some startling statements which, as I remember them, now seem to me to be based on the soundest common sense, but which to my then immature thought were a surprise and a shock. The next Sunday I exchanged with the pastor of a church in the village where the lecture had been delivered. Knowing that many of my congregation had been listeners to Mr. Emerson's address, I thought this a good opportunity to warn them against the heresy promulgated by the great transcendentalist, and this I proceeded to do, referring to his astounding statements as 'the foolish utterances of Mr. Emerson in his recent lecture.' At this point my eyes swept over the congregation, and they were rewarded by the startling discovery that the Concord Philosopher was seated directly in front of me, his face lighted by a kindly smile. He had remained in town with a friend for a few days' rest and had accompanied him to his church. Fortunately I was speaking from a manuscript, and so was able to blunder on to the end of the sermon. The next morning as I entered a car to return to my home, Mr. Emerson was just in front of me, and as he settled himself in a seat he motioned me to take the vacant place by his side. This I did, but not without manifest embarrassment, which he did not appear to notice, unless it was shown by his extreme consideration and kindness of demeanor. He immediately began to talk in the most fascinating way, and as the summits of the most northern of

the Adirondacks loomed above the horizon, he spoke of a camp which he and many literary friends had established at Ampersand Mountain. While I was listening, charmed with his description of mountains, lakes, and rivers, interspersed with ancedotes of his friends, many of whom were among my favorite authors, the trainman called the name of my station. I arose to depart, expressing the pleasure I had received from his conversation, when with a hearty pressure of the hand, accompanied by a kindly smile, such as I had observed on his face the Sunday before, he replied, 'And I had the pleasure of hearing you preach yesterday.' Whereupon I left him, wondering just how much kindness there really was in his last remark."

Mr. Emerson had doubtless really enjoyed learning how his ideas had impressed a youthful minister like Mr. Moxley, for his serene attitude toward adverse criticism was characteristic of him.

A touching incident is told of the meeting between Grimm and Emerson. Hermann Grimm became an admirer of Emerson in a rather odd fashion. He called on Bancroft one day, when the historian was our minister to Berlin, and finding him away, entered his study and seated himself to await his return. Taking up a small volume from the table, he read one page and was confused to find that he had not understood it. He read the page again, when its meaning flashed into his soul. Just then Bancroft appeared, and Grimm exclaimed, "What is this? Where is the man who can put such

thought into words?" "Oh," replied Bancroft, "It is one of my countrymen, but at home he is considered a crazy man." Grimm's only reply to this was, "Allow me," and he tucked Emerson's essay on nature into his pocket. Day after day, as he read it, his enthusiasm grew, and he did not rest until he had translated many of Emerson's essays into German. He constantly urged upon his own people a knowledge of Emerson, and he made it a test of a friend—"if he could enjoy Emerson." For long years, however, this admiration was considered one of Grimm's idiosyncracies, and a university professor was heard to say in his salon one evening, "Your American has thoughts, certainly, but we Germans do not need them."

Years passed. Emerson, travelling, saw the name of Hermann Grimm at a hotel in Florence, and called upon him, introducing himself. He could not speak any German, nor could Grimm speak English. Holding each other by the hand, they walked about Florence all day. With the aid of a little Greek and more Latin, they contrived to say a good deal to each other, although Grimm said afterward that he never longed for anything in his life as he did that day to be able to speak a little English.

There has been a general impression that Emerson disliked music, but Oliver Wendell Holmes said, "Emerson was not at all insensible to music," but liked it as much as any one who had no technical knowledge of it. A century ago Harvard had no well equipped music department. Its only staff was

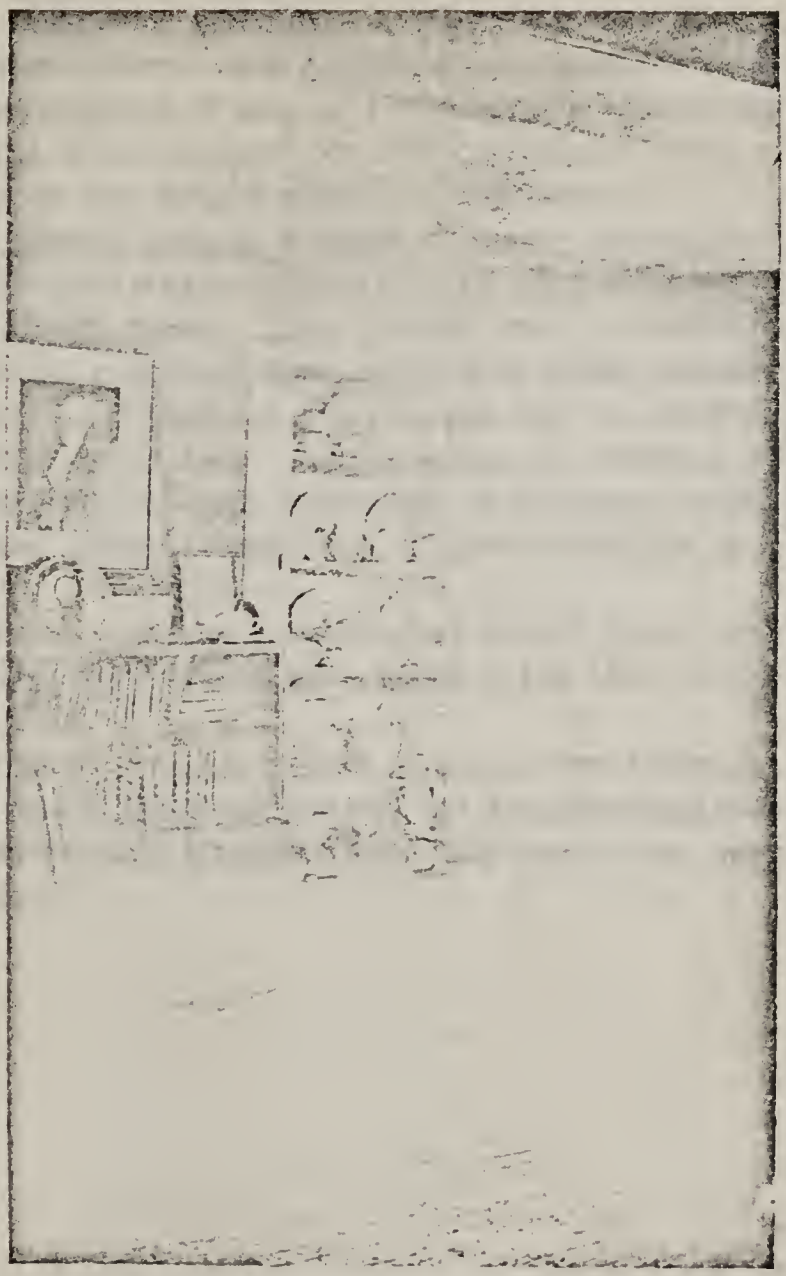
one old-fashioned singing master. Soon after Emerson entered college he heard that the pupils were being gathered for instruction in singing, so, being anxious to learn, he promptly presented himself with the others.

When his turn came, the singing-master ordered him to "Chord." "What?" said Emerson. "Chord! Chord!" shouted the master. Emerson smiled at him in his gentle manner, and said, "I haven't the least idea what you mean." "Why, sing! Sing a note," was the impatient reply. "So," Emerson tells us, "I made some kind of a noise, my idea of a note, and the singing master said to me, 'That will do! You need not come again, young man.'" So ended the first and last lesson.

One wonders if Emerson's lyric poetry might not have been enriched if some man of vision had patiently tried to instil in his pupil a love of music and at least a basic knowledge of it, instead of immediately discouraging all attempts to learn.

Emerson talked the Brook Farm project over with Grandfather, who said, "It is a fine psychological experiment, but I foresee its financial failure." Unfortunately a true prophecy. Emerson refers to this attitude of Grandfather's when he writes later: "There was one figure, the practical farmer, an honest neighbor, who was not drawn to the enterprise by any spiritual attraction, and who seemed to be regarding the whole affair as with the most good-natured wonder, as a prodigious masquerade."

The two oldest Hosmer children were at the



A CORNER OF THE LIVING ROOM
IN THE HOSMER HOUSE

colony, however, and always referred to it with the greatest affection. It is said that the daughter Dolly was the original of one of Hawthorne's characters who was distinguished for her optimistic habit of looking on the bright side of everything.

The young people formed a merry group and like other less transcendental youth were not always strict about rules. One young man sometimes slipped out evenings, first opening a cellar window by which he re-entered after hours, and in stocking feet crept up to bed. One evening on entering he plunged into an open hogshead of molasses which had been placed under the window while he was away.

Emerson was much beloved at Brook Farm, was a frequent visitor, and gave talks at the Hive or the Grape Vine.

He was always happy and serene, never hilarious, smiled much, laughed seldom, but his beautiful face and wonderfully illuminating smile made him very attractive.

CHAPTER IV.

EMERSON AS A LECTURER

EMERSON became very popular in the lecture field. He possessed a rare and peculiar power as an orator. Whether this lay in the terse and brilliant sentences, in the serenity and poise of soul, in the originality of thought, in the dignity of his bearing or in the fascination of his voice, he drew large audiences and those that heard him once seldom missed a second opportunity.

Judge Hoar well expressed this power, in writing about Emerson's address at the Burns centennial, January twenty-fifth, 1859.

"The company that he addressed was a queer mixture. First there was the Burns club—grave, critical, and long-headed Scotchmen, jealous of their countryman's fame and doubtful of the capacity to appreciate him in men of other blood. There were the scholars and poets of Boston and vicinity, and professors of Harvard College. Then there were state and city officials, brokers and bank directors, ministers and deacons, doctors, lawyers, and 'carnal self-seekers' of every grade. I have had the good fortune to hear many of the chief orators of our time, but I never witnessed such an effect of speech upon men as Mr. Emerson then attained. It reached at once to his own definition of eloquence—'a taking sovereign posession of the audience.' He had

uttered but a few sentences before he seemed to have welded the whole mass of discordant material and lifted them to the same height of sympathy and passion. He excited them to smiles, to tears, to the wildest enthusiasm. His tribute to Burns is beautiful to read, perhaps the best the occasion produced on either side of the ocean. But the clear articulation, the musical modulation of tone and voice, the loftiness of bearing, and the radiance of his face, all made part of the consummate charm."

In Concord alone he lectured a hundred times. I had the great pleasure of hearing him at his last lecture, the fiftieth anniversary of the Concord Lyceum course. Mr. Emerson wished to refuse this honor, as he had given up all public speaking, but the demand was so urgent that he finally consented. Miss Ellen helped him with his notes, and the town hall was filled to overflowing with his townsmen who came to express their loving esteem. They listened intently, with a feeling of sadness, knowing that this was their last opportunity publicly to show him their appreciation of his worth.

Emerson always spoke for the college, although he was not blind to its defects. He thought that to a brave soul its tuition could come from wide travel, or association with great men; but for most, college was the easiest method. Here he differed from Thoreau, who said that the only good part of a good college was its library. When Emerson affirmed that most branches of an education were taught

at the college, Thoreau scornfully added, "Yes, all the branches and none of the roots." When Emerson said he was always looking for a new poet, Thoreau replied, "I have found one in the woods, but it had feathers and had not been to Harvard." "Let us cage it," said Emerson. "That is just the way the world always spoils its poets," was Thoreau's sarcastic answer.

Because Emerson has been such a vital influence in my life I think of him as primarily one that stirred by his own beauty and sanity of thought other lives to reach out to higher levels. As Theodosia Garrison writes of him:

Through his own heart, as through a sea's clear glass,
He watched the mighty host of mankind pass,
And confident, serene, assured, his pen
Pointed the path for wildered souls of men.

What matter in what place may rest today,
The crumbling, toppled temples of his clay!
The unhoused spirit, strong, alert, and free,
Still lifts the voice that thrilled humanity.

It was his spiritual intuition that lifted his message into a universal one. The women of his day, Edna D. Cheney, Mrs. Howe, Louisa Alcott, and many others, found in him this inspiration. F. B. Sanborn writes: "He uttered for me the secret of the universe so early in my youth that I escaped those doubts and that despair which so often confront the thinking man as he stands on the threshold of active life." Bliss Carman refers to the need of a great friend whose convictions might stay the

wavering faith of the young men of his day in the midst of tottering creeds. That friend, he says, was Emerson. From him "he perceived that while the signs and vestments of our paternal religion might vanish like smoke, the breath of goodness at the core of things remained potent and quickening as before." Monroe D. Conway testified that Emerson revolutionized his life. "A book of Emerson's," writes John Albee, "was the star that shone above me and lighted the pathway." Says G. Stanley Lee, "I know of no man who can so flood my days with the realities I never touch." Reverend Cyrus Bartol writes, "Emerson was one of those with the power of drawing from the upper atmosphere, occupied by the Unseen from whom such as he are but flesh detained."

Two lines of Channing's ode well expressed his life:

> Thy sure meridian taken by the sun,
> Thy compass pointing true as waters run.

To A. Bronson Alcott, Emerson was "a revelation of the divine spirit."

Emerson wrote to John Albee in 1852, "There is a super-Cadmean alphabet, which, when one has learned the characters, he will find, as it were, secretly inscribed . . . not only in books and temples, but in all waste places, and in the dust of the earth. Happy he that can read it! for he will never be lonely or thoughtless again." He embodies this same idea in the well known lines:

Let me go where'er I will
I hear a sky-born music still:

. . . . .

'Tis not in the high stars alone,
Nor in the cups of budding flowers,
Nor in the redbreast's mellow tone,
Nor in the bow that smiles in showers,
But in the mud and scum of things
There alway, alway something sings.

In all his philosophy and poetry we notice this transfiguring of life. He never touches the common or even the trivial things of every day, but lo! they become lifted up into a place of dignity and purpose.

One of his recollections of boyhood was as follows: "On Sundays when the children came home from church, his mother would say, 'Waldo, what was the text this morning?' If he could not remember he would promptly reply, 'It was something about religion.' Strange to say, this answer always satisfied his mother. Throughout his life he remained interested in religion, but not in particular creeds. He believed trustfully and confidently in a God that was immanent in His universe, and that the indwelling spirit of God must be his light and guide.

So nigh is grandeur to our dust,
So near is God to man,
When duty whispers low, 'Thou must'
The youth replies, 'I can.'

"Belief and love—a believing love will relieve us of a vast load of care. O my brothers, God exists. There is a soul at the centre of nature and over the will of every man. There is guidance for each

of us and by lowly listening we shall hear the right word."

Emerson believed in immortality, saying that the only sane solution of this life was that it was an education for another. "We need not fear that we can lose anything by the progress of the soul," he says. "The soul may be trusted to the end. That which is so beautiful and attractive in these relations must be succeeded and supplanted only by what is more beautiful and so on forever." He thought immortality could not well be argued; one must live in the idea of it. He said, "I am so sure that the hereafter will be so much better than the possibility of imagining, that the manner does not occupy my thought, so wonderful is the goodness and wisdom of the ordering of the hour."

CHAPTER V.

ELLEN EMERSON

AMONG my most precious memories of Concord are the afternoons once a week which I spent at the Emerson homestead. Several of us young women, seven or eight in number, met there each week for helpful reading. We went to Miss Emerson's room, which was directly over the study, where Miss Ellen, as she liked to have us call her, sewed or knitted while we took turns reading.

Many of the poems we read she liked to have us copy and learn and I still re-read them with enjoyment and profit. Among her favorite selections were the Bible, the poems of Arthur Hugh Clough and of George Herbert and certain poems in a collection called *Lyra Germanica,* which collection she particularly liked. We often stopped the reading to talk over the meaning, to discover whether we agreed with the idea and meant to follow it or not. We discussed all sorts of ethical problems with her. Sometimes she told us how she had solved these problems in her own experience. Often she could illuminate some point by recalling ideas she had gained in her knowledge of famous people, whom she had met abroad or whom she knew through their letters or visits to her father.

Some of her talks revealed the finest philosophy of life; for example, one day she said, "I make it

ASHTON NOSEBAG SHIP.

a rule never to say anything against people that I know, unless I have first said it to their faces." I asked her how long she had kept that rule, and she said ever since her father's friend, William Channing, had told them on one of his visits that it was a strict rule of his.

I remember Mr. Channing well. He was a Unitarian preacher in London. He visited the Emersons, preached at the church, and I remember an evening when he was their guest of honor at one of the 'conversations.' His saintly face, snow white hair, and fresh English complexion, together with his eloquent manner of speaking, impressed me.

Grandfather was fond of quoting, with a half comical, half pathetic expression, a bit of negro philosophy: "It has early been borne upon me that life is not all snicker." At times when I too have been pessimistic over life's outlook, these lines from Arthur Hugh Clough, which were full of meaning to Miss Ellen, have been like a strong staff to lean upon.

Call on us!
When the enemy is near thee,
Call on us!
In our hands we will upbear thee,
He shall neither scathe nor scare thee,
He shall fly thee and shall fear thee,
Call on us!
Call when all good friends have left thee
Of all good sights and sounds bereft thee
Call when hope and heart are sinking
And the brain is sick with thinking,
Help, O help!
Call, and following close behind thee

There shall haste, and there shall find thee,
Help, sure help.
When the panic comes upon thee,
When necessity seems on thee
Hope and choice have all foregone thee,
Fate and force are closing o'er thee,
And but one way stands before thee—
Call on us!
Oh, and if thou dost not call,
Be but faithful, that is all.
Go right on, and close behind thee
There shall follow still and find thee,
Help, sure help.

After my marriage it was only once or twice a year that I was able to spend a day with Miss Ellen, but those were always red letter days. The children loved to be included in the invitation, and my small girl would be made happy with a doll which had belonged to Miss Alcott and had formerly been one of the Micawber twins, who had performed in her famous Jarley Wax Works.

In my journal I find the following entry:

"May twenty-fourth, 1902. Mr. Brown and I went to Concord at nine, to spend the day with Miss Ellen, and Edmund came at noon for luncheon. She gave us the history of various things in the house. Some of the furniture was her grandmother's, notably the mahogany chairs. The large round table in the drawing-room was bought by Edith at an auction in New York. The picture of *The Fates* was ordered by Mr. Emerson to help a Mr. Wall of Florence. Carlyle gave the picture of *Aurora* to Mrs. Emerson, and there is on the back of it a message in his handwriting. Other portraits are those of John Knox, and two portraits

of Carlyle, one as a young man and the other much older. One of these is by Sir Thomas Lawrence. The picture of *Puck Leading off the Dawn* was painted by David Scott of Scotland. On the mantel stood a small bust of Goethe, also some mementoes of Egypt; papyrus, effigies, and an old box from a tomb.

"Behind a bust of Cabot were Raphael drawings from the Pitti Palace. On the other wall were portraits of Carlyle, Fox, Sainte-Beuve, and Coleridge. In the hall were those of Mr. and Mrs. Bliss and the lovely pastel of Mrs. Emerson and the oil of Miss Emerson.

"In Mr. Emerson's room hangs an early portrait of Mrs. Emerson with the familiar illusion cap, but with forget-me-nots at the ears instead of ribbons. Mr. Brown remarked that the picture of Mrs. Emerson in the hall seemed sad, and Miss Emerson said that her mother always had a touch of sadness in her temperament.

"After lunch we all went into the garden. The ladies' delights had run rampant everywhere. Tiger lilies had also overstepped their bounds and poppies had emigrated even into the meadow. She showed us how to make dandelion stems sing. She said she believed in reincarnation, as it tired her to think of too many different individuals. Later she sent me many perennials to plant in my garden as a souvenir of her Concord garden."

On another May day in 1908 I had taken some Western friends to visit her. She called our atten-

tion particularly to the print of Castle d'Este which hung on the pine tree side of the study. This was a gift which Margaret Fuller was bringing to Mr. Emerson and which was found on the beach after the fatal wreck of the ship bringing Margaret Fuller, her husband, Count Ossoli, and her little son, for a visit to America. It is said that Thoreau spent days walking the beach at Fire Island in hopes of finding the least memento of the Ossoli's. The print still has the marks of the beach sand on one edge. Dr. Emerson said the cypress trees had grown much larger than those of the print when he was at the Castle.

We spent a half-hour in the garden, where narcissi grew in many rows, beautiful purple tulips, lilacs, and poppies, with lilies of the valley. That day Reverend Charles Ames had invited the Sunday school children of the vicinity to meet at Emerson's grave and hold services, it being the Sunday nearest to his birthday, May twenty-fifth.

The next winter brought me sadness, for on January fourteenth, 1909, I went to the funeral of my much beloved Miss Ellen. Quotations were read from Emerson's thoughts on death, one of her favorite hymns, *While thee I seek, protecting power,* was sung, and some unpublished notes of Mr. Emerson's were read. I never go to Concord without missing her gracious and helpful presence.

CHAPTER VI.

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

NOW and then Hawthorne, who was never much inclined to social customs, would walk across the fields for an hour's chat.

One morning he came to tell of Horace Mann's marriage. Another day he brought the announcement of Mr. Mann's appointment to study school systems in Europe. His earnest efforts for educational reform and the effective results of his labors at length made the name of Horace Mann well known and appreciated, but at that time he labored under difficulties and against great opposition. Therefore this journey to Europe was a welcome bit of tidings to his friends.

Sometimes Hawthorne would talk over his latest story with Grandfather. Once the latter said to him, "How is it, Mr. Hawthorne, that you are so apt to end your stories mournfully?" "That is the way I see life," was the answer. In one of these talks he remarked that he himself considered *The House of the Seven Gables* the best thing he had done. That was before *The Marble Faun* was written. Of the latter work he said when it was about half completed, "It darkens damnably."

Hawthorne writes of an early call on Grandfather while on his way with a friend to Walden Pond. They stopped at Emerson's, who walked with them

as far as the farm. "We turned aside a little from our way to visit Mr. Edmund Hosmer, of whose homely and self acquired wisdom Mr. Emerson has a very high opinion."

Mrs. Hawthorne asked Grandfather to bring his little girls to see her. On the way Aunt Sarah gathered a bouquet of wild flowers to give her. Mrs. Hawthorne was pleased and asked her if she would like to go up to her room. There the artistic work of her hostess was a source of wondering admiration to the little girl. Over the washstand was a painting of water nymphs. On the footboard of the bed she had painted a sunset and on the headboard she had represented dawn by copying Guido's *Aurora*. After that my aunt, childlike, would gather wild flowers on every possible occasion as a plausible excuse to go down to the Hawthorne's. Later Mrs. Hawthorne gave Aunt Mary lessons in drawing and her daughter, Mrs. Read, still has a sheet with figures made by her mother while under that instruction.

Mrs. Hawthorne's skill as an artist brought her praise and appreciation from many friends. In her earlier years she devoted much time to painting and drawing. During their courtship Hawthorne wrote in 1840, "You cannot think how much delight those pictures you are painting are going to give me. I never owned a picture in my life, yet pictures have been among the earthly possessions (and they are spiritual possessions too) which I most coveted. They will be incomparably more precious to me than

all the productions of all the painters since Apelles."

Before that in 1836 Emerson wrote, "My dear Miss Sophia: I beg you to accept my thanks for the beautiful drawings you have sent me. I feel myself quite unworthy of such elegant gifts. I shall keep them as a treasure to be shown to all my friends who have good or capable eyes, that they may rejoice with me in the power and in the promise of the artist."

Mrs. Hawthorne illustrated the paper edition of *The Gentle Boy*, the copies of which are now very rare and valuable.

The marriage of the Hawthornes like that of the Brownings was an ideal one. Hawthorne wrote, "Nothing like our story was ever written, or ever will be; but if it could be told, methinks it would be such as the angels might delight to hear."

In one of her letters Mrs. Hawthorne speaks of the enjoyable evenings when Hawthorne read aloud to her. "At present we can only get along with the old English writers, and we find they are the hive from which all the modern honey is stolen. They are thick-set with thought, instead of one thought serving for a whole book. Shakespeare is preeminent. Spenser is music. We dare to dislike Milton when he goes to heaven. We do not recognize God in his picture of Him. There is something so penetrating and clear in Mr. Hawthorne's intellect that now that I am acquainted with it merely thinking of him as I read winnows the chaff from the wheat at once . . . From reading

his books you can have some idea of what it is to dwell with Mr. Hawthorne, but only a shadow of him is found in his books."

Their first child, Una, was named after the Una in Spenser's *Faerie Queene,* in memory of their Spenser readings.

Of the children still living Julian is a writer and Rose is now known as Mother Mary Alphonsa of the Congregation of Saint Rose. She was educated abroad and married in London George Parsons Lathrop, a man of brilliant intellect, at one time assistant editor of *The Atlantic Monthly.* They lived for a time at the Wayside in Concord where their son Francis was born. He was a very beautiful and attractive child. Every evening Mr. Lathrop would catch him up in his arms and toss him to the ceiling, the little boy delightedly saying, "Way up, papa, way up to the sky." After the child's death Mr. Lathrop wrote in a poem, "But a father far wiser than I has taken my baby way up to the sky."

The loss of their child changed the current of their lives. Mrs. Lathrop became a Roman Catholic and resolved to devote her strength to caring for the unhappy. She entered the General Memorial Hospital in New York for training and finally opened two rooms of her own for cancer patients. This was the first place in the city where cancer sufferers were admitted free.

After her husband's death she joined the Dominican Sisters and built a home where one hundred patients could be received. She became the superior

and this wonderful work of devoted love has steadily grown in power.

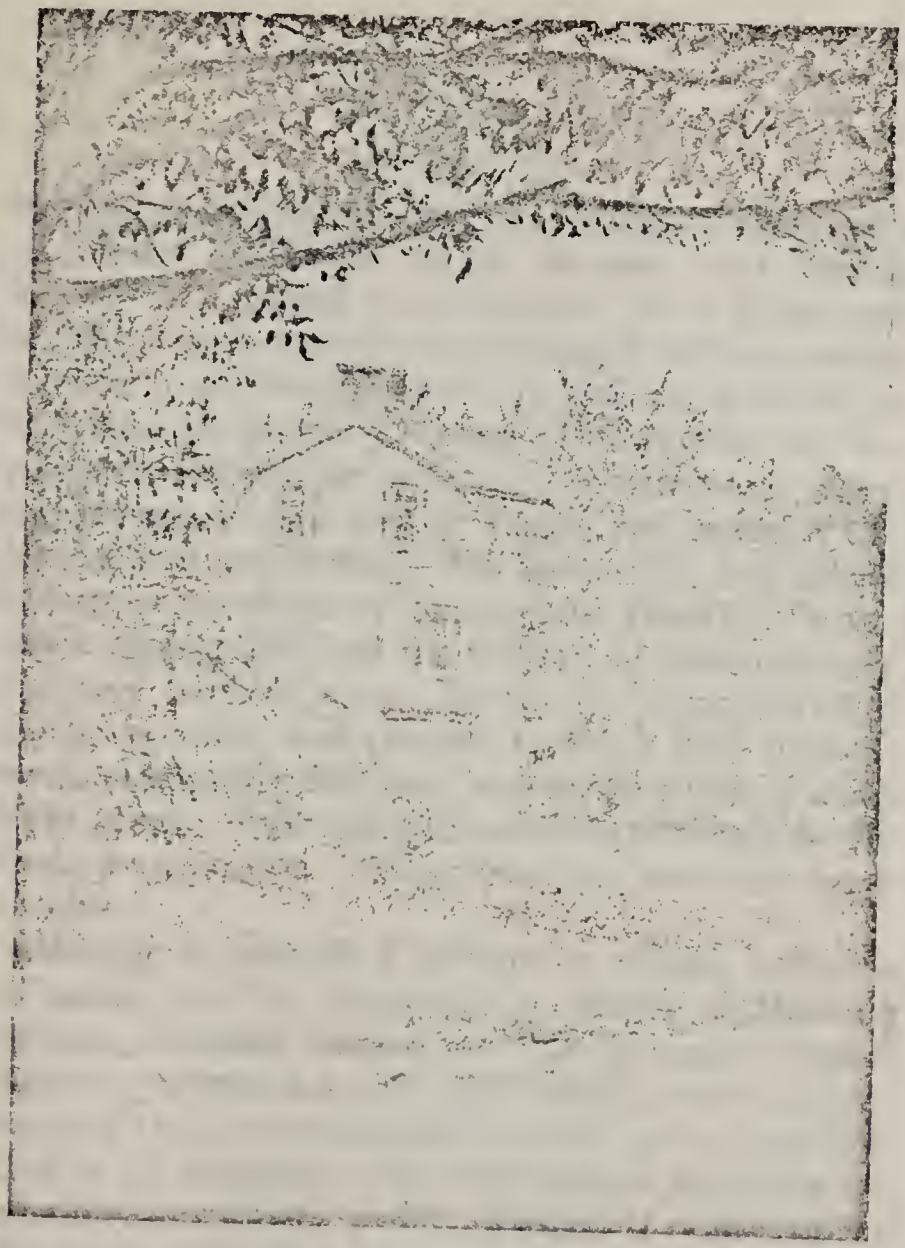
The consensus of opinion describes Hawthorne as unsually fine looking. Several of the people who knew him have spoken of him as the handsomest man they have ever known. He was inclined to stoutness. Channing called him "bulky, with a walk like a sailor," but he describes his head as "massive like Webster's." He always bore himself with dignity and much reserve of manner. Extremely shy when forced to meet strangers, if one could pass the first barriers of this reserve he was found to be a most agreeable companion, his conversation brimming over with wit and satire. It was this same satire that made his friends regret that some of his personal letters should ever have been published. Miss Elizabeth Peabody, his sister-in-law, told me that Hawthorne was very scrupulous about having his letters kept private and would make his friends solemnly promise not to show them. She cited, for example, the letters alluding to Margaret Fuller, saying that, although he himself thought that she was over-praised and felt at liberty to express his opinion to his friends, he would have been very loath to have detracted in any public way from her fame.

Unlike most of the Concord writers he was not fond of long walks. Sanborn tells of inviting him to go to Gowan's swamp. This was one of Thoreau's favorite walks, the pool teeming with interest and beauty to him. To Hawthorne however it was just

a dreary, unalluring bog, and after glancing around he said, "Let us get out of this dreadful hole." His mind preferred to study the mysteries of mental processes rather than to observe and love the ways of nature as Thoreau did.

Unlike the others he was not accustomed to carry a note book. He liked to write standing at a tall desk in large, ledger-like books. Hawthorne wrote *Mosses From an Old Manse,* which made him famous, in the same room where Emerson wrote his first book, *Nature.*

His retiring disposition kept the Concord people from knowing him well. After his death Emerson wrote to Mrs. Hawthorne, "I have my own pain in the loss of your husband. He was always a mine of hope to me, and I promised myself a rich future in achieving at some day, when we both should be less engaged in too tyrannical studies and habitudes, an unreserved intercourse with him. I thought I could well wait his time and mine for what was so well worth waiting. And as he always seemed superior to his own performances, I counted this yet untold force an insurance of a long life."



THE OLD MANSE

CHAPTER VII.

THE ALCOTTS

TWO of the names that have added to Concord's fame are those of A. Bronson and Louisa Alcott. Mr. Alcott was intended for a Plato, but set down on a barren New England hillside, where a living must be made by a profession, a trade, or hard manual labor. To none of these was our impractical philosopher adapted. Incapable of earning enough to pay rent or supply the needs of the family, is it any wonder that he said he had moved twenty-seven times in twenty-nine years? His unusual ideas made him the subject of much ridicule. He wore linen in winter because he disapproved of shearing sheep, and refused to drink milk because cows mourned when their calves were taken away from them. From the same altruistic beliefs he became a vegetarian. Philosophy was meat and drink to him.

Hoping to become a pioneer in reform methods of education, he conducted a school in Masonic Temple, Boston, known as The Tremont Street School. There are two tales which, true or not, embody the practical reasons for its lack of success. One is of the pupil who was obliged to strike his teacher's hand with a ruler instead of receiving the blows himself. The other is of a parent who called at the school one day. "Mr. Alcott," she said, "my

boy is playing truant so much I don't see how he can learn anything here." Alcott was astonished, but after thinking a moment replied, "It may be true, since I have been studying so much about his soul that I haven't noticed the absence of his body."

His next experiment was the result of a visit to England, where he met Charles Lane, a man thoroughly in sympathy with Alcott's transcendental ideas. Together after returning to America they bought a worn-out farm of ninety acres in the town of Harvard, Massachusetts. This they named "Fruitlands," a purely ideal name, because, as Louisa said, out of the five very ancient apple trees on the place only one ever bore fruit.

Here their Utopia was started. All labor must be manual, the men with spades replacing plows, oxen, and horses. No living thing was to be killed, not even bugs or weeds, since all life was entitled to its own fulfillment. All products of slave labor, such as coffee, tea, cotton, and wool, were forbidden.

One by one the few people attracted to the plan left, and finally even the Lanes deserted the place. With the collapse of the ideas which had been manna to the soul of the Concord philosopher, the shores of the promised land again receded and Alcott was ill for weeks. Penniless, with winter ahead, Mrs. Alcott was near despair. Finally she said, "I know a woman with a very big heart; I shall go to see her." So she came to Grandmother, who after hearing her story crowded her own large family together and gave up three rooms, and the

Alcotts moved in for the next six months, Mrs. Alcott having sold from their meagre stock at Fruitlands whatever furniture she could spare, to provide funds for their immediate use.

Such jolly times as those two sets of children had! Louisa's energy made play even from work. Mr. Alcott had permission to have for his use any wood which he could cut down and bring home from the farm wood-lot. As manual labor was not his forte the wood-box was often empty. For such times Louisa invented a most fascinating game. All would run to the lot and the one who succeeded in riding hobby horse home on the largest branch won the game. She and one of my older aunts used to argue hotly over the respective merits of their younger sisters who were each named Abby. Finally they agreed to amuse themselves by writing sonnets which should embody their admiring sentiments and so the baby Abbys became the subjects of some queer sounding verses, undoubtedly Louisa's first attempts at composing.

On one occasion when I had taken some friends to meet Miss Alcott, after talking to them for a few minutes, she turned to me and said, "When I knew this morning that you were coming, my memory turned back to the winter we lived with your grandmother and a trivial incident came to my mind. I used to go upstairs with your aunts to help them make up the beds. The very first thing they did was to delve down and fish out from somewhere a queer looking bundle. I thought it wouldn't be

polite to ask questions, so it was some time before I discovered that those bundles contained a brick or a flatiron." In those days there were no furnaces in farmers' houses and grandmother always insisted that the children must go to bed with warm feet. After supper a long row of bricks and flat-irons adorned the kitchen stove. Each child as it went up stairs must seize one, wrap it up in some convenient cloth, preferably pieces of worn out woolen blankets, and carry it to bed.

Louisa should have been a boy. She could climb a tree like a squirrel and no fences or sheds were too high for her feats of agility. It was doubtless the memory of her own youthful activity that gave her such a ready sympathy with boyish pranks and made her so true a friend to boys and girls in every condition of life.

Mr. Alcott was a vegetarian to whom even milk, cheese, and eggs were taboo, but Louisa loved to go with the children into our cellar and eat pieces of cheese or go to the pantry for her share of slices of brown bread spread with thick cream.

She was very kind to the younger set but when she was tired or wanted to get away she would invent errands to the barn or somewhere. When they returned she and the older girls would be nowhere to be found.

Sunday evenings the Alcotts had simple teas and our children went in with the others. Small baskets were passed around, each basket covered with a red and white checked napkin. On lifting the

napkin you might find only two crackers and an apple, for perhaps that week the Alcott purse was slim. There were, however, good times after supper. Mr. Alcott would read from *Pilgrim's Progress* and the children would choose some scene to act out. Mr. Alcott made Bunyan so vivid that one day Grandmother missed her youngest boy. He was finally found trudging along the road with an improvised pack on his back.

A woman in Concord said to Aunt Jane, one day, "I can't seem to make *Pilgrim's Progress* interesting to my boy as you do." "Oh," said Aunt Jane, "I learned from Mr. Alcott to be a good skipper."

In the Alcott kitchen a shower bath was set up and its daily use was insisted on. Little Beth was recovering from scarlet fever and Grandmother always thought the treatment was too vigorous for her weakened system, for she went into a decline.

Mrs. Alcott was a remarkable woman, very brave throughout all the many trials of her early married life, and most hospitable as far as her means would allow. The children loved to be with her. One day when she was sewing and they were playing near her, she suddenly looked up and said, "Well, here I've been trying to do something that not one of you will ever be able to do. Guess what it is." They all guessed in vain, until she told them that she had been trying to thread the point of her needle.

During the years when the Alcotts were very poor, Mrs. Alcott with wonderful bravery exalted

their poverty by showing the children how to glorify plain living with high thinking.

Many a family has had material wealth and spiritual poverty; the Alcotts taught the world that spiritual wealth might be attained in the midst of material poverty.

In the spring Mrs. Alcott received a small legacy which she decided to use in the purchase of a home. With this and a loan from Emerson The Wayside was bought and Mr. Alcott amused himself by adding a tiny gable in front. Later it was sold to Hawthorne and they moved next door to The Orchard House, where they lived a number of years and where many of the happenings in the first part of *Little Women* occurred.

Over the front door was Louisa's den, where she put on her little red cap of thinking. Mr. Alcott made rustic seats and trained vines over them, which the artist daughter, Abby May, later liked to transfer to her canvas.

Their struggles were by no means over when they had settled down in The Orchard House, and many of them are familiar to the readers of Miss Alcott's books. One winter's day there came a severe cold snap and the Alcotts were without wood. Mr. Alcott said, "We will pray that our wants may be supplied." A blinding snowstorm raged all night and in the morning a load of wood was lying by the road near his gate. There was great rejoicing at this speedy answer to prayer and all hands took hold, chopped and lugged into the shed,

and the fires blazed merrily away during a storm which made all travel impossible.

At length the sun shone, the roads were dug out, when lo! a man appeared with a wagon seeking the wood which he had dumped there when his horses became exhausted and could drag the load no further. The gift of the Lord was however partly chopped and some of it in ashes. Besides there was no money to pay the man, who furiously demanded his pay and finally threatened to sue. The matter leaked out, probably through the man's anger, and some good friend quietly paid the bill; so the prayer kept them warm for some time.

Mr. Alcott had no conception of the dire straits to which his impractical ways often reduced the family. Mr. Emerson on one occasion gave him twenty-five dollars to expend, as he hoped, on some of the necessities lacking in the house. The money was spent, however, on some expensive stationery, which Alcott brought home with the joy of a child in a new toy. Once when he was starting for Boston, Mrs. Alcott gave him twelve dollars to buy her a shawl much needed for the winter. When he returned he met her with a beaming face and produced from under his arm a long coveted edition of Plato which he had joyfully discovered at a second hand book store. She and the shawl had been utterly forgotten. One can well imagine the length of time it would take for that long-suffering helpmeet to save up the twelve dollars again.

A few things he liked to do with his hands like

the rustic seats which at one time so freely adorned the grounds around The Orchard House. Once he made a wind harp which he set up in a tree opposite the side door at Emerson's. It worked best in a gale. Like the harp, Alcott's poetry has passed into forgetfulness and his own personality is seldom spoken of in this generation, yet who can tell how many of those altruistic ideas he sowed so lavishly on bleak mental soil grew somewhere into beauty well worth the while.

Alcott at one time, in the kindness of his heart, planned an outdoor study for Emerson near the latter's house. He called in Thoreau to help adjust it, but Thoreau was disgusted because he could not make Alcott see that buildings must conform to geometry. With Alcott, "curved were the lines of beauty." Some of the shingles were so beautifully curved that they made fine runways for the rain and the building was too damp to be a cheerful study. Mrs. Emerson called it "The Ruin" and it early justified the name.

Like Thoreau, Alcott loved animals, so much so indeed that he refused to eat them or in any way provide for his own comfort out of their suffering. Perhaps he was a forerunner of that saying of Tolstoi's, "The future of the world lies with the Vegetarians."

It is said that in 1867 Mr. Alcott carried with him on the train from Concord a pair of grey squirrels, which he released on Boston Common

He observed that later they had made homes on the Beacon Street side and were rearing families.

In spite of his impractical ways Alcott was a welcome addition in intellectual circles where things of moment were being discussed. Called by Emerson "The Prince of Talkers," little by little he became accepted as an idealist worth listening to. The dream of his life was realized when he founded the "Concord School of Philosophy."

A story which illustrates his power in conversation is as follows. Once finding himself without funds in a city some distance away he decided that he had better get home, so in spite of his penniless condition he boarded a steamer bound for Boston. When the steward demanded his ticket Alcott said that he had neither ticket nor money, but that he would gladly earn his passage. "What can you do?" asked the man. "I can talk," said Alcott. The disgusted steward turned him over to the captain, who finally allowed him to try his skill on the passengers. The result was so successful that the captain invited him to his own table and a free passage was secured.

I have been told that as a young man Alcott was heavy featured, but years of high thinking had softened and refined his features when I knew him. His long white hair and ruddy skin, his dignified but courteous manners, made him a striking personality. He gave out his Orphic sayings from an inner conviction that man may be, if he listens, a vehicle for higher wisdom. He was in his ele-

ment when presiding at the sessions of the school of philosophy, where so many well known people discussed everything from protoplasm to Plato. He was always ready to answer questions and it wasn't easy to get the best of him. During the summer school period some young acquaintances of mine had a wager as to which of them should ask him what he meant by the following sentence: "When the mind is issing it is thinging things." Finally one of the young men took up the challenge. Mr. Alcott listened sedately and without changing countenance replied, "Young man, if I said such a sentence as that, it must have meant something in the connection with which I said it," and he passed serenely on.

Concord is apt to have sultry weather in summer and the philosophers wending their way through dust and heat came in for more or less ridicule. Even Louisa had her share in the fun when she wrote:

> Philosophers sit in their sylvan hall
> And talk of the duties of man,
> Of chaos and cosmos, Hegel and Kant,
> With the Oversoul well in the van.
>
> All on their hobbies they amble away
> And a terrible dust they make.
> Disciples devout both gaze and adore
> As daily they listen and bake.

Alcott was an unique character. True to his convictions, he went his way without aggressiveness or resentment, finally winning tolerance for his whims and respect for his mentality. Quick to

ARISTOTLE AND THE SCHOOL OF PHILOSOPHY

perceive a new idea, he would take some word of Emerson's, ponder it, and retake it to Emerson elaborately clothed in Alcottian language. Emerson would be delighted, often failing to recognize the idea as originally his own.

Emerson thought highly of Alcott, but Carlyle couldn't understand him. Emerson often brought over Carlyle's letters to read to Grandfather. In one of them he said: "A. B. Alcott has been here over night and I have been to take tea with him, but I cannot like him. What business has he to be always living in the future?"

Louisa was born at Germantown, Pennsylvania and went to a Quaker school. When she was very small she saw a colored child sold for debt. She had no use for slavery after that.

Even as a little child Louisa showed her love of independence by running away. When they lived in town, Boston Common was a favorite hiding place. Once the town crier had to be summoned, and as he cried out the description of the child a small voice piped up from the shade of a doorway, "Why, dat's me."

Margaret Fuller, who had heard so much about Mr. Alcott's advanced ideas on education that she was curious to see its results in his own children, walked down to the Alcott's one day with Mr. Emerson. They were sitting under a tree on one of the rustic seats made by Alcott, who was explaining some of his hobbies, when a noise like a hurricane sounded. Suddenly a wheelbarrow

dashed round the corner. In it was a dirty faced, much dishevelled child, driving a still dirtier girl, who was prancing and snorting at the top of her lungs as a runaway horse. Just as the wheelbarrow reached the guests, the horse tripped, over went the whole cavalcade, and a shrieking mêlée resulted. Such was Miss Fuller's introduction to the "Model Children."

Emerson was Louisa's Goethe to whom she wrote sonnets and whom she once even dared to serenade. Thoreau she loved and walked with. She had a deep sense of fun, which helped her over a great many hard places.

Louisa liked literature but was not fond of numbers. When she was in the primary school and became mischievous her teacher could always head her off by calling out suddenly, "Louisa, how many are seven and six?"—a poser which would effectually subdue her for a while.

In order to help out the meagre income of the family, she even took the position of a servant. She was so abominably treated that she had to leave. As Sanborn said, "Louisa was very wonderful in always being willing to try anything, but even she could not stand her treatment as a servant."

At nineteen Miss Alcott was made joyful by having a story published by *Ledson's Pictorial,* for which she received five dollars. A few months later she sent *The Rival Prima Donnas* to the *Boston Saturday Gazette,* and to her great delight it was accepted and a cheque of ten dollars forwarded to her. Still

later she dramatized this second story and succeeded in having it taken by a theatrical company, who gave her as payment a pass for forty nights, although for some reason the drama was never actually played.

She herself had natural ability in acting, as those who saw her famous representations from Dickens in her Jarley Wax Works could testify. She had played at amateur theatricals, especially on evenings at home where scenes from *Pilgrim's Progress* were vividly portrayed with childish enthusiasm, much to the approval of Mr. Alcott. At one time she successfully applied for a position on the stage, but unfortunately for her ambition to become an actress, the manager broke his leg and the contract was annulled. Another story was taken by *The Gazette,* and she writes thus of her first glimpses of fame: "One of the memorial moments of my life is that in which, as I trudged to school on a wintry day, my eye fell upon a large yellow poster with these delicious words, *'Bertha,* a new tale by the author of *The Rival Prima Donnas,* will appear in *The Saturday Evening Gazette.'* I was late; it was bitter cold; people jostled me; I was mortally afraid I should be recognized; but there I stood feasting my eyes on the fascinating poster, and saying proudly to myself, in the words of the great Vincent Crummles, 'This, this is fame.' "

Louisa's health was never good after her experiences in the civil war hospitals, which she records in her book, *Hospital Sketches.* In spite of

poor health she worked hard to supply ease and comforts for the family. May received a *dot* of three thousand dollars when she married and after her death Louisa educated her child. Her mother's last years were made comfortable at the home in Concord, which she had bought from the Thoreaus with money earned from her writing. Mrs. Alcott grew very large with dropsy, so that she had to be carried upstairs in an arm chair. She would smile with her accustomed bravery and say, "This is the beginning of my ascension." A number of times she would add, "It is beautiful to die."

One day after Louisa's books became popular and poverty was no longer known in the household, a small cousin of mine went in to call. Mrs. Alcott was very busy, but she was too kindly to send the child home, so she said, "Annie, wouldn't you like to sit at Louisa's desk and write a nice long letter to your father?" When that was completed, a letter to mother was suggested as a good idea, and so the child was happily amused and always retained a glad memory of a forenoon at Louisa's desk.

One evening we went to a reception at the studio of Daniel French, given on his return from studying in Italy. When the carriage came for us it was occupied by Mr. Alcott and Louisa. The latter immediately became absorbed in chatting with my aunt, which left Mr. Alcott to amuse himself with a young girl like myself. He was as courteous as though I had been a queen:—waited for me while we laid aside our wraps, and escorted me through the

rooms in the most charming manner. He certainly won my heart from that day.

Louisa did everything possible for her father at the Louisburg Square house in Boston where he died. I used to go in sometimes at the latter place to help pass away the time for Mr. Alcott when he was grown too feeble to do much for himself. Our chief source of amusement was the checker board, but after a while even that failed, for if I won he wasn't pleased and if he suspected me of letting him win that was even worse.

While the friends were assembled at his funeral in Louisburg Square, word came that Louisa had joined her father in death. Her name will survive for many years through the love of children who delight in the Little Men and Women of her books.

CHAPTER VIII.

HENRY D. THOREAU

ONE of the most welcome visitors to the Hosmer farm was Henry D. Thoreau. There have been many opinions of this quiet man who wore coarse shoes and homespun raiment, which he considered best fitted for his long walks and close study of nature. Some said that because except to make a few lead pencils, survey a neighbor's field, or teach a term of school he had no regular occupation, he was an idle, lazy sort of fellow. Others, that he was an eccentric citizen who refused to pay his poll tax. His friends knew him as a rare soul, of feminine purity and of keen intellect. A few readers found in him an original and daring thinker, bringing them into touch with those things which make for the soul's eternal progress. Some discovered in him the closest of observers, a wonderful painter of things he had seen, so accurate a describer of bird or flower that the description needed no name to enlighten it.

His intense love of nature was like a sixth sense which won from her secrets hidden from others. As Velasquez reproduced the life of his time, so Concord has been reproduced in his writings. Concord's gentle landscapes are painted with colors that glow with the intensity of his love for the town. He used to say that he had been born in just the right

place at just the right time. Again, he wrote, "Concord is my old coat, my morning gown, my study gown, my working dress, and at last will be my night gown." It has also become a monument to him. As long as Walden Pond remains or Concord River flows, the name of Thoreau will be associated with them. He taught hearing to those who before had only ears, and sight to those who had never seen. He said he would not know the river or the fields if he awoke some morning with someone else's eyes. Channing called Concord a bare town, but Thoreau made it teem on every side with beauty.

The cuckoo-pint was brought to Concord by Thoreau's grandfather. This grandfather was a wealthy merchant, but the father did not succeed in the business and failed, so that although he was not really poor he always felt so.

Graduated from Harvard, in after years the only part of college life he appears to have remembered with joy were the hours he spent at the library. He won and kept a scholarship and earned some money while an undergraduate by teaching school in Canton, Massachusetts. His life at Cambridge was interrupted by a serious illness, although he went back to college for his senior year. Whether on account of this illness or not, we find him more and more determined to travel his own path, unmindful of the broad highway made popular by usage. In discrediting the value of study for the sake of high rank we note the beginning of that distrust

for the learning acquired in college which grew more intense in later years.

On finishing his course he taught school in Concord. His pupils always testified to the excellence of his discipline, but the story is that the school committee were not satisfied because he never resorted to corporal punishment. Thoreau therefore flogged six boys one afternoon, but resigned the next day from a profession too brutal to suit him.

He and John then opened a private school in their own home. Henry taught French, Greek and Latin, physics, and mathematics. The school prospered, outgrew the house, and they moved to larger quarters. They were much beloved by the pupils, who were managed without resort to flogging or threats. They were original in their methods; surveying was taught and open air walks taken for nature studies. The non-resident pupils boarded with the Thoreaus. The school had twenty-five pupils enrolled when John's illness became too serious and Henry refused to go on alone.

Mr. Thoreau, senior, being financially embarassed, Henry came to his aid in the manufacture of lead pencils. My aunts well remembered the parcels of these pencils with the label, "Thoreau and Son, Concord, Mass." These were peddled from Boston to New York and Thoreau speaks of his satisfaction in knowing that their pencils were the finest on the market. Our family used them and I still have several of them among my treasures.

Afterwards he invented a machine for making a fine lead dust to be used in electrotyping, which brought in considerable money for the family. This machine spun round like a top inside of a box set on a table. It was wound up to run itself and was easily operated by a woman. After Henry's death Sophia kept on with the business and orders came directed to S. Thoreau, Esq., customers supposing her to be a man.

The family being provided for, Henry was free to carry on his true business, that of "Living." Now, surveying a neighbor's field, or doing some odd job for a farmer was sufficient to supply his personal needs while off on a tramp or a boating cruise, or for acquiring leisure to write.

From boyhood the river had a strong attraction for him. When sixteen he built a boat called "The Rover," of the style or seaworthiness of which we have no record. While in college, the Red Jacket was made, not much of a craft, according to his own notes. He writes in his log book of its casting him ashore on Nashawtuc Beach, whence he says, "Got her off at twenty minutes of four, and after a pleasant passage of ten minutes, arrived safely in port with a valuable cargo,"—the precious cargo being himself.

After leaving college his brother John and he built on land near the present public library a fifteen foot dory, which they named "The Musketaquid" after the Indian name of the river. This was,

he said, "strongly built but heavy," and was painted green with a border of blue.

On the evening of August thirtieth it was packed ready for the trip. The next day the sailors set forth, their sisters and some friends waving goodbyes from the shore till the boat was out of sight.

Part way down the river they met a man from Concord and thoughtfully sent a radio message to their mother, in the shape of an hibiscus which the man promised to deliver to Mrs. Thoreau at church.

The incidents of this voyage are told in Thoreau's first book, *A Week on the Concord and Merrimac Rivers.*

His enjoyment of the river was tragically interrupted by the sudden death of his brother who cut his finger while shaving and died of lockjaw.

Those who thought of Thoreau as cold or indifferent little understood the depth of feeling that lay beneath his undemonstrative exterior. During his father's illness his devotion was such that Mrs. Thoreau in recalling it said, "If it hadn't been for my husband's illness, I should never have known what a tender heart Henry had." He mourned deeply for this beloved brother. He laid aside his flute and for years refused to speak his name. A friend told me that twelve years later Thoreau started, turned pale, and could hardly overcome his emotion when some reference to John was made.

For nearly two years after John's death he lived with the Emersons. Mr. Emerson, who was away much of the time on lecture tours, liked to leave

CONCORD RIVER

Thoreau in charge. There was a strong tie of grief that joined Mrs. Emerson, who had lost little Waldo, and this young man who mourned so deeply his beloved brother, and a warm affection arose between them. Henry's capable ways were a great comfort to her. The loose bolts were tightened, the hens well cared for, the garden bloomed in luxuriant beauty, the vegetables and fruit trees were tended by skillful hands. The children held him as a boon companion and recognized the youthful heart that could make evenings pass in merriment. No wonder that Mrs. Emerson loved him or that he found an abiding corner in the heart of that spinster as uncompromising as himself, Emerson's Aunt Mary.

Later he accepted an offer to go to Staten Island as tutor for Judge Emerson. The Musketaquid was sold to Hawthorne, who had just come with his bride to the Old Manse and wanted a boat. Hawthorne writes amusingly in his journal of the antics of the craft. Finally by dint of practice under Thoreau's instruction, he acquired the knack of managing it. Mrs. Hawthorne always insisted that the boat became tameable only because she changed its name to the "Pond-lily." Be that as it may, the Pond-lily gave Hawthorne some delightful outings which his pen most charmingly describes. It was in this boat that he and Channing brought back the body of a girl who in a fit of depression had thrown herself into the river, which incident he later embodied in the *Blithedale Romance*. Just before leaving for Staten Island, on a cold day in April with ice still

floating on the river, Thoreau appeared at the Old Manse and begged for one last ride. The two went down to the landing, bailed out the water, and rowed to the foot of Nashawtuc. On coming back to the Manse, Hawthorne writes, "We boarded a large cake of ice which was floating down the river and were borne by it directly to our own landing place with the boat towing behind." When Hawthorne left the Manse, the Pond-lily became the property of Channing and at length passed into oblivion. From Staten Island Thoreau wrote, "My thoughts revert to those dear hills and that river which so fills up the world to its brim." Most of the time at Staten Island he was restless and homesick, so in six months he returned to Concord. From now on he pursued the real desire of his heart, to test a life lived closed to nature and record the results of his observations.

For some years he had vaguely dreamed of having a sylvan shelter fitted for his purpose. He made some attempts to buy an isolated farm, but finally decided to build a hut at Walden on land owned by Emerson, the latter at the time planning to erect a similar one across the pond to be used for himself as a "literary retreat." With a borrowed axe he felled "some tall, arrowy white pines, still in their youth" for the cabin, which he planned to be ten feet wide and fifteen feet long.

Early in the morning of July fourth, Thoreau stopped at the farm, for this was the day chosen for the raising. Grandfather shouldered his axe

and together with his three oldest sons, John, Edmund, and Andrew, went down the turnpike to Emerson's and across the fields and woods to the chosen site. By dint of hard work the shack was raised by nightfall and Thoreau's dream of a woodland study was made a reality. Here he lived for two years and another name was added to Concord's calendar of famous places, that of Walden Pond.

In *Walden* he writes of the friends who had thus assisted him; among whom were Channing and Alcott. "No man was ever more honored in the character of his raisers than I. They are destined, I trust, to assist at the raising of loftier structures one day."

Before he left his cabin for good, he planted in rows where his beans had been, trees which should in after years recompense Emerson for the use of his land. These trees later were destroyed by fire.

His life at Walden was never intended by him to be that of a hermit, nor was his sojourn there a very lonely one. When actually writing he refused to be disturbed; otherwise a chair set outside the door proclaimed his readiness for company. He went into the woods to live near nature, to be a neighbor to the birds, "not," as he says, "by having imprisoned them, but having caged myself near them."

Being such an adept at tramping, the distance to the village meant moderate exertion for him and he was a frequent visitor at his own house, some-

times, to please his mother, carrying back a home-made pie, which doubtless was not included in his cost of living accounts, but was considered an unessential luxury. Often, also, he walked over to the Emerson's. On stormy days his familiar step was wont to be heard on our doorstep. He knew that if the weather was bad farm duties must be suspended and that Grandfather would probably be at leisure.

The children hailed his coming with delight. It was better than any fairy tale to listen to his stories of the woods or the river. To hear him talk they would gather around as still as mice. What marvelous ways the birds and squirrels had which no one else had discovered. Who but Mr. Thoreau could tame the fishes in the pond, feed the little mice from his fingers, keep up a whistling fire of conversation with the birds till they alighted on his head and shoulders, wondering what friend could be so very familiar with bird language. Who else received calls from the moles,—and how the children's eyes would brighten as he told them of the tamed partridge so proud of her family that she brought them all to show him and how in return for her kindness he shared his breakfast with the brood. He knew every spot where the wild flowers grew, every sheltered nook where the maidenhair or climbing fern hid their treasures of gracefulness. One day he came in with a rare nettle which he could not place. Aunt Abby was immediately sent for the botany.

Nothing could be said till the nettle problem was settled.

He liked to read to the children from the *Canterbury Tales.* Often he would stop and think about a line, saying, "You can sometimes catch the sense better by listening than by reading."

In later life when my Aunt Jane became a teacher and read these same tales to her pupils, she said she could distinctly recall that melodious voice and the wonderful sense of rhythm he could impart as he read.

Unlike Emerson, Thoreau was a natural musician. He played the flute well and had a musical voice for singing. His ears were so keenly attuned to the various melodies of nature that sounds unheard by others were easily distinguished by him. It was this musical sense that enabled him to discern so accurately the notes of birds and the calls of other animals.

He had fitted a lyre in one of his windows and he noticed that in a deep cut in the woods certain trees formed a natural aeolian lyre when the wind blew through them. Aunt Eliza, when a small girl, tried to make an aeolian lyre and was quite disconsolate because it wouldn't work as the one at the Thoreau home did.

Who but a musical naturalist could have written the following after listening to the bells on New Year's day?

"I heard the bells of Concord town, a faint, sweet, and, as it were, natural melody, worth importing

into the wilderness. Over the woods this sound acquired a certain vibratory hum, as if the pine needles in the horizon were the strings of a harp which the bell-tones swept. There came to me a melody which the air had strained, and which had conversed with every dead leaf and needle of the wood; that portion of the sound which the elements had taken up and modulated and echoed from vale to vale."

On a Sunday afternoon the children loved to go to the Walden shack. Thoreau sat at his desk, Grandfather was given a chair, while they arranged themselves along the edge of the cot bed, the youngest child still remembering that her feet couldn't quite reach the floor. If the conversation grew too abstruse or they were tired of sitting still, one by one they slipped out to amuse themselves in the woods. They might be rewarded later by a glimpse of friendly animals, or Mr. Thoreau would give them a row on the pond.

To take a walk with Thoreau, one must rigidly adhere to the manners of the woods. He could lead one to the ripest berries, the hidden nest, the rarest flowers, but no plant life could be carelessly destroyed, no mother bird lose her eggs.

First he would give a curious whistle and a woodchuck would appear—a different whistle and two squirrels would run to him. A different note yet and birds would fly and even so shy a bird as a crow would alight on his shoulder. The children must be mute and very motionless till each pet was

fed from his pocket and had departed. Thus the children were introduced to his family, as he called them.

When boating, he could name all the lilies of the pond or the wood lilies, and he could delight them with stories of the Indians who once lived around Walden.

When someone asked him why he did not shoot the birds and make a collection of them if he wished to study them, "If I wanted to study you would I shoot you?" was the quick reply. "A gun gives you the body only, but the field glass gives you the bird."

The tenderness of his heart was shown in this unvarying love for all life. St. Francis of Assissi admitted that the destinies of animals required our Christian sympathy. Thoreau said, "The best part of an animal is its anima (its soul), but the scientists never get any further than its shell."

Even winter brought its quota of visitors. In his journal he writes, "On a Sunday morning I heard the crunching of the snow"—which announced Grandfather's approach. Grandfather was a short man and light in weight, but he always walked with a slow, deliberate step, as though meditating, a step easily distinguished by keen ears from that of other frequent callers like Channing or Sanborn.

Sometimes the owner of that familiar grey homespun suit, made by his aunt to suit the needs of a perennial tramper, would appear at the farm late

in the afternoon. That meant a simple supper with the ten children and a long evening for talk.

Aunt Jane said that Thoreau and her father discussed Scandinavian mythology so much that she became an adept in those legends. Such a deep impression was made on her mind that in later life she was compelled to translate Greek and Roman myths back into her early models of Thor, Woden, and Igdrasil. Grandmother told me that sometimes the two men would get into a lively discussion over some vital question. Neither would give in, each could well sustain his own side of the argument, time would pass unheeded and the hour of midnight strike before they realized it. If, however Thoreau departed unconvinced or unconvincing and could think during the following day of a fresh argument wherewith to overwhelm Grandfather's point of view, he would come back and they would go at it again the next night.

After the trips to Maine or Canada there were fascinating evenings when no child wanted to go to bed, so interesting were the new experiences in forest lore and the stories about the Indians.

There was one Indian expression, current in the family, which I often say silently to myself when I hear anyone stretching the truth. The Maine campers would invite the Indians to come over and have a supper of deer meat around the camp fire. Sometimes, though, the hunting was poor and other meat was substituted, the deer not being available. After a while the Indians became suspicious and when

they were asked to have deer meat one Indian would grunt to another, "Mebbe so, mebbe woodchuck."

The children all loved Mr. Thoreau and had no fear of him. Doubtless no liberties were taken, for "seen and not heard" was Grandfather's motto for them. Thoreau himself resented too great familiarity. Emerson said he should as soon think of taking the arm of an elm tree as that of Henry. Once when some clergymen were calling at his mother's, one of them slapped him on the shoulders, saying, "Here is the fellow who camps in the woods." "And here is the fellow who camps in the pulpit," replied Henry.

His love for simplicity may have been a legacy from his Quaker greatgrandmother who refused to marry her lover until he had laid aside his too foppish ruffles. In his quiet way he was always deferential at home and courteous to all who met him sincerely.

Edna D. Cheney tells the following story: "Channing, the poet, was noted for his oddity. One day he asked Henry to tell his mother (whom he did not like) not to appear when he came. Thoreau refused, saying, 'No indeed I shall not; it is my mother's house.' The next time Channing went there Mrs. Thoreau opened the door, and the poet turned his back to her while he inquired if Henry were at home. Mrs. Thoreau immediately turned hers and there they stood, back to back." Mrs. Thoreau was a bright woman and equal to any

occasion. She loved nature and her daughters were enthusiastic botanists.

When I was quite a small girl I used to be taken to the Thoreau house with my aunt. That was when the mother and Sophia were living alone after Henry's death. Mrs. Thoreau did not care particularly to amuse children, but she suffered me for the sake of my aunt, for whom she had much affection. As soon as we came she placed me in a child's rocking chair. Then Sophia must find the cat and deposit it in my lap. How much I would give now to remember the conversations of those three interesting women, but, alas, I only recall that enormous maltese cat that purred so loudly as I stroked her.

Sophia was devoted to her brother, spoke of him as being very lovable, and both she and Mrs. Thoreau always regretted having him regarded as indifferent.

It is said that the Thoreau brothers were fond of the same young lady (a cousin, by the way, of my husband's mother), but that neither one would express his affection, fearing to become a rival to the other. Some of Henry's poems seem to indicate some such experience. The lines

> Still will I strive to be
> As though thou wert with me.
> Whatever path I take
> It shall be for thy sake.

are supposed to refer to the object of this affection.

The Puritan flavor was so strong in Concord in the early years of the nineteenth century that the

habits of Thoreau were disapproved by many. All must go to the meeting house twice if possible on Sunday. No horse was taken out except for church or a funeral. That a young man, just out of college, should not choose a profession but prefer to spend his Sabbaths in a boat on the river seemed to the good villagers quite sacrilegious. In these days of Sunday golf and canoeing it would have attracted little notice.

One forenoon Thoreau and a companion went by boat to explore the sources of the Sudbury river. In cooking their lunch on the bank in some way the dry grass got on fire and in spite of their efforts spread so fast that a hundred cords of wood belonging to a Mr. Wheeler were burned. A few years ago the latter's daughter was calling at our house and in the course of the conversation Thoreau's name was mentioned. "Don't talk to me about Henry Thoreau," she said. "Didn't I all that winter have to go to school with a smootched apron or dress because I had to pitch in and help fill the wood box with partly charred wood."

The desire to carve his own way produced an intense egoism by which he sought to discover the greatest assets to be added to man's supreme possession, "his own personality." Yet having found them he writes, "I would fain communicate the wealth of my life to men, would really give them what is most precious in my gift."

Indifferent he might seem on the exterior but how close to the surface lay his warm sympathy

for the runaway slave, his courageous facing of ostracism in publicly defending John Brown and the anxiety of those sleepless nights when Brown lay in prison. Did those things betoken the indifference of a cold heart?

He refused to pay state taxes as a protest against Massachusetts' adoption of the infamous fugitive slave law, but he gladly paid his road tax, for that was for a worthy purpose.

An instance of his kindness of heart was his observance of a ragged boy: "Leonidas and the Spartans dared at Thermopylæ to die, but this little Irish boy dares to face the bitter cold in ragged clothes for a schooling." Mrs. Thoreau took pity on this boy and made him a suit out of an old one of Henry's. She evidently was not much of a seamstress for the neighbors declared that the clothes sat on Johnny as if fitted to a tea kettle.

Thoreau was a skillful gardener, often supplementing Emerson's lack of ability. He planted trees and shrubs around the house and also beautified the terraces back of the Orchard House with fruit trees to suit Alcott's vegetarian taste.

If he seemed different from other men it was because, as he wrote, "If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer." It was just this that gave value to his contributions to the world. Whatever notes he heard from that "different drummer" he listened to intently and recorded honestly.

Once the Chicago speculator, known then as "Old

Hutch," came to the house to talk with Grandmother about Thoreau. That was after Grandfather's death. He seemed deeply interested in all she told him. Soon after the press was full of the account of some deal whereby he had cleaned up millions. When Grandmother read of it she shook her head and said, "He had better read his Thoreau all over again."

A severe cold brought on the family malady from which three generations had suffered. Yet he bore his suffering as well as his loss of the out-of-door life with great patience and serenity. Toward the last he wrote, "I am enjoying existence as much as ever and regret nothing." When his mother's sister asked him if he had made his peace with God, he replied, "Why, Aunt, I didn't know we had ever quarrelled!"

He kept on with his manuscripts up to the last days. When very weak, he was found by a neighbor writing. "You know it is the fashion to leave an estate behind you," he said.

The afternoon before he died, as one of my aunts was passing the house, Sophia called her in. "Mr. B—," she said, "has offered to sit up with my brother tonight, but Henry wants your father." So after supper Grandfather walked over to spend the night with him.

The next day he passed on, trustfully expectant of renewed vision. When Grandfather said, "I heard the robins sing as I came along," Thoreau answered, "This is a beautful world, but soon I shall

see one that is fairer," and again he said to him, "I have so loved nature."

When Grandfather started to go home in the morning Thoreau called Sophia and asked her to give him a copy of one of his first editions. On the fly leaf she pinned a lock of John's hair, which today is as black and glossy as it was then. In this autographed copy Thoreau copied in writing several lines left out by the printer, which makes the book especially valuable.

Thoreau never pretended to analyze nature technically, but it was this deep love, human, intuitive, subtle rather than scientific, that made him the pioneer naturalist of his country. When a well known writer made a remark about Thoreau to John Burroughs, the latter replied, "But I couldn't hold a candle to Thoreau."

Froude wrote to Thoreau, September third, 1839, "I have the right to tell you that there is no man living on this earth at present whose friendship or whose notice I value more than yours. I have gone near despair. I am growing not to despair and I thank you for the helping hand."

Through Thoreau's message to the world rings out the note, "Simplify your lives." Mr. Thomas Cholmondely, nephew of Bishop Heber, was very fond of Thoreau. The first time he came to Concord, being a thorough Englishman and reared in luxury, he brought with him a valet, a bath tub, and ten boxes. Thoreau taught him the value of a more simple way of living, so the next time he

arrived alone with very little luggage. Later he sent some East Indian books, translated into both English and French, to add to Thoreau's library, which according to an intimate friend of the family was the finest collection of Persian and Indian poetry in the America of that day. When the announcement of Cholmondeley's death in the Crimean War came, it surprised the simple Concord folk to learn that Thoreau's friend possessed such a long list of titles.

"Where there is knowledge, where there is virtue, where there is beauty, where there is progress, there is now his home," Emerson wrote to Sophia, and at the funeral he said, "Concord will some time know how great a son she has lost."

Of the Thoreau relics, his chair, writing desk, quill pen, buckskin suit, and walking stick, thought lingers longest over the stick. A plain but sturdy stick, like its owner unadorned with trappings of vanity. A cane for use not only in walking, but for measuring, since it was notched on a flat surface to twenty-four inches.

Could it speak, what a medley of deep mystical musings and practical knowledge it could reveal, from its long wanderings with such a combination of seer and surveyor, scholar and naturalist as was Thoreau. What marvellous commingling of the spirit of nature and the soul of that intrepid seeker for truth who listened so closely to Mother Earth's revelations and pondered so deeply on their meanings. We might discover just how much of the real

Thoreau is still lost to us; we might learn more of the wondrous glory of the near by and familiar and perceive in greater degree "just how much civilization is necessary for the serenity of the soul."

The portrait expressing best the real man is the crayon by Rawse. The artist was staying at Thoreau's house while making a portrait of Emerson. He became fascinated by Henry's face and wished to make one of him, but what he wanted eluded him. Over and over he would say, "I can't get it; I can't get it." Finally one day he jumped up from the dinner table exclaiming, "Now I have it!" and went to work with a satisfied spirit. Rawse liked best to work as much as possible away from the sitter.

Thoreau was tall and straight and gave the impression of an independent pine tree. The kindness of his eye and the strong nose added to this impression of self reliance and strength.

No writer was ever more loyal to principle. "I would remind my countrymen that they are to be men first, and Americans only at a late and convenient hour."

"There is no such thing as accomplishing a righteous reform by the use of expediency. There is no such thing as sliding up hill. In morals the only sliders are blacksliders."

"The fate of the country does not depend on how you vote at the polls—the worst man is as strong as the best at that game; it does not depend on what kind of paper you drop into the ballot-box once a year, but on what kind of a man you drop from your chamber into the street every morning."

How much those eyes of his saw in a few minutes! Looking from a train as it stops briefly at Keene, New Hampshire, he notices the wide street and moralizes quaintly on the wisdom of making broad plans in youth when land is cheap and ends thus, "I trust that every New England boy will begin by laying out a Keene street through his head, eight rods wide."

He wrote once, "The youth gets together his materials to build a bridge to the moon, or perchance a palace or temple on earth, and at length the middle-aged man concludes to build a wood-shed of them." Thoreau never descended to wood-sheds, but built a temple to the eternal spirit, rough hewn in places perhaps, but its windows were golden with light. Within he set up an altar on which there burned steadily the sacred fire of truth. Passing by churches, never bothering about creeds, he demanded not only purity of thought, but he extolled excellence in conduct. He says, "Be not simply good. Be good for something." And again, "It is not enough that we are truthful, we must cherish and carry out high purposes to be truthful about."

No one who understood Thoreau could possibly think of him as an idler, as some have done. All that we know about him contradicts that idea.

The beautiful accuracy of his drawings, the exactness of his writing, the excellent quality of his pencils, and his masterly skill at gardening testify to his industry. As a scholar most justice has been done him by Channing the poet. He amused himself by translating two dramas of Æschylus and

parts of Homer, to which he added a number of lesser Greek poets. He was familiar with all the early English poets, read Latin as easily as English, and read Greek classics in the original. He was also a student of oriental literature, extracting from it, as did Emerson, whatever appealed to him as true.

From his seemingly inactive hours, many have learned how to find glory in the near by and familiar. Well for us all if we listened more to his ideas of life and men, for that dauntless apostle of truth was not mild as to our shortcomings.

Once he wrote, "The pathway toward heaven lies south or southwest along the Old Marlborough Road." So those who follow in Thoreau's footsteps will find many "Lanes of Happiness."

These quotations from Thoreau I have always cherished as revealing the peculiar quality of the man:

> I do believe that the outward and the inward life correspond. The outward is only the outside of that which is within.
>
> Man cannot conceive of a state of things so fair that it cannot be realized.
>
> Let nothing come between you and the light.
>
> When we would rest our spirits we must recline on the great spirit, as we rest our bodies by reclining on the earth.
>
> Let love be purified and all the rest will follow.
>
> How prompt we are to satisfy the hunger and thirst of our bodies, but how slow to satisfy the hunger and thirst of our souls.
>
> You must make tracks into the unknown. That is what you have your board and clothes for.
>
> Nature is goodness crystallized.

What business have you, if you are an angel of light, to be pondering over the deeds of darkness, reading the New York Herald and the like?

God could not be unkind to me if He tried.

The only way to speak the truth is to speak lovingly.

I will not doubt the love untold
Which not my worth nor want hath bought
Which woos me young and woos me old
And to this evening hath me brought.

Soon after Thoreau died, a poem appeared in *The Atlantic Monthly*, called *Thoreau's Flute*. It was at first attributed to Emerson, but was written by Louisa Alcott and expresses well her thought of Thoreau:

We sighing said our Pan is dead.
His pipe hangs mute beside the river,
Around it wistful sunbeams quiver,
But music's airy voice is fled.
Spring mourns as for untimely frost,
The bluebird chants a requiem,
The willow blossom waits for him,
The genius of the wood is lost.

Then from the flute untouched by hands
There came a low harmonious breath,
For such as he there is no death.
His life the eternal life commands.
Above man's aims his nature rose.
The wisdom of a just content
Made one small spot a continent
And turned to poetry life's prose.

Haunting the hills, the stream, the wild.
Swallow and aster, lake and pine
To him grew human or divine
Fit mates for this large hearted child.
Such homage nature ne'er forgets,
And yearly on the coverlid
Neath which her darling lieth hid,
Will write his name in violets.

E 448.9 I9.12

5563